# PRACTICAL DISCOURSES

Upon several Divine Subjects.

VOL. III.

Written by

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MVSEVM
BRITANNICVM

*For this Reaſon I believe it has happened, that theſe Diſcourſes run more upon a Philoſophick Strain, than any other Compoſitions of mine do of this Nature and Character. And I am glad they do ſo; not only becauſe they will afford a more ſuitable Entertainment to your Lordſhip's* Contemplative *and* Philoſophick Genius, (*if a Perſon that has ſo much brighter Thoughts at command of his own, can be ſaid to be* entertain'd *by any thing that comes from ſo vulgar a Hand,*) *but alſo becauſe I think we cannot do better Service to Religion, than by reſolving the Practical Duties of it into Principles of Philoſophy, or make a better uſe of Philoſophick Notions, than to employ them in the Service, and for the intereſt of Religion.*

*How far theſe Ends are ſerved in the Contents of the following Papers, every Reader has now ſome ſort of Right to judge; but few I believe will be found in any Order or Claſs of Men ſo well qualified to do it as your* Lordſhip, *whoſe general inſight into the whole Compaſs of Learning, and whoſe particular Excellency, even to nicety and exactneſs, in the more refined Theories of Philoſophy, are ſo well known to the World, that they deſervedly render you at once the* Admiration *and the* Glory *of a nice and inquiſitive Age, which is ſo ingaged in the view of your Perſonal Excellencies, that your Birth, Quality, and great Station make the leaſt part of your Character; as the Eye is ſo fill'd and taken up with the* Luſter *of the Sun, as hardly to mind the* Height *of the Orb from whence it ſhines.*

*My*

To the Right Honourable *THOMAS* Earl of *Pembroke* and *Montgomery*, Baron *Herbert* of *Cardiff*, Lord Privy-Seal, *&c.* and one of Their Majesties most Honourable Privy Council.

My Lord,

I *Should not presume to make your Lordship a Patron to these* Discourses, *if your Lordship had not been already pleased to make your self so to the* Author *of them; and that in a manner so signal and so beyond the ordinary measures of Generosity, that I was thence incouraged to hope that the same Goodness that obliged me to the most grateful Ac-*

*knowledgment, would alſo induce your Lordſhip to accept of this firſt Opportunity I have of a publick Expreſſion of it.*

*The Diſcourſes which I here venture to ſend abroad under the Patronage of your Lordſhip's great Name, were all compoſed in the Retirement which by your Lordſhip's peculiar Favour I now enjoy, which indeed does ſo naturally favour the Inclinations of a Thoughtful Mind, and is ſo advantagiouſly ſeated, I may ſay* Calculated *for Contemplation, that perhaps it has had ſome particular Influence upon theſe Compoſitions, which it may be will be found a little to ſavour of the Place of their Production, as Mens Diſpoſitions are ſaid to Symbolize with the* Planet *of their* Nativity.

# TO THE READER.

YOU have here ſome of thoſe Thoughts wherewith I entertain my Solitude, and which have help'd to fill up ſome of thoſe looſer Hours which hang upon a *Country-Life*, and which I think are thus much more accountably ſpent than in *beating* about after News, or holding tedious and impertinent Chat about State-Concerns. It is my ſerious and real Judgment that theſe Diſcourſes both in regard of their Subjects and the manner wherein they are handled, may be fitted for publick Uſe and Service, and may contribute

tribute to improve both the Theory and the Practice of Religion; and for this Reaſon I am induced to Communicate them to the Publick. As for any Honour or Reputation that may happen to redound to my ſelf by them, as I made it not my End in this Undertaking, ſo do I deſire to renounce and diſclaim it, partly as a thing that is not my *Due*, (for what pretence can a *Creature* and a *Sinner* have to any ſuch thing as *Glory*?) and partly as too vain and too empty a Good for a Rational Spirit to take up with, eſpecially having ſo many greater things to imploy both his Thoughts and his Deſires upon, having a *God* and a *Conſcience* to whom he may ſtudy to approve, and with whoſe *well done* he may without any great

# The Epiſtle Dedicatory.

*My Lord, I know not whether ſuch Qualifications as theſe make you any whit the fitter for the Patronage of theſe Diſcourſes, or of the Author of them, who may have too much reaſon to dread the Severity of ſuch a Judge, and whoſe intereſt might have adviſed him to ſeek out for a leſs judicious Patron, one that was more of a Level with himſelf. But the great Obligations I am under to your Lordſhip above all other Men, make it my Duty to addreſs my ſelf and my (however mean) Performances to your Lordſhip, which I do with all that Reverential Deference which is owing to your Lordſhip's Quality and Perſonal Greatneſs, with all that Modeſty and Concern that ought to accompany ſo defective a Preſent, and with all that Senſe of Gratitude which becomes that ſingular*

*Favour*

# The Epiſtle Dedicatory.

*Favour wherewith (to the Hazard of your own Judgment) your Lordſhip has been generouſly pleaſed lately to honour*

Your Lordſhip's

Very Humble,

Obedient and Obliged Servant

*J. NORRIS.*

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TO

The General

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## *ERRATA.*

PAge 69, Line 15, for *but* read *both*. In Line 16, dele *both*.

A

great Self-denial, content himſelf. If therefore my good Reader, you happen to find here any new Notion diſcover'd, or any uſeful and important Truth clear'd, or any Duty of Religion rationally accounted for, or affectionately and advantagiouſly recommended; if in ſhort, you find either your Head inlightned, or your Heart warmed and put into a quicker *Motion* by any thing offer'd to your Conſideration in theſe Diſcourſes, beſtow not your Praiſes or Commendations upon the Author of them, who deſires them not, who deſerves them not, and who dares not take them; but rather joyn with him in aſcribing all the Glory to the great Teacher and Inſtructer of Mankind, to him who ſhines upon all our Minds

Minds with the Beams of his Divine Light, and informs us (even while we think we instruct one another) in the secret recess of our Reason; to him who is the Substantial Wisdom of the Eternal Father, and the Light of all his Creatures, in whom are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, and who is the *true Light that enlightens* both you and me, and *every Man that comes into the World*; whose is the Kingdom and the Power, and to whom be the Glory. *Amen.*

The

# A DISCOURSE CONCERNING *The Measure of Divine Love, with the Natural and Moral Grounds upon which it stands.*

Mat. 22. 37.

*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.*

A Very just and reasonable, but sure, one would think, a very needless Injunction. For need any Power or Faculty be under any other Law, than that of its own *Nature*, to de-

light in its proper Object? Does the Sense want a Precept to be pleased with sensible Good? Need we address our selves to the Eye to persuade it to love Light, or take pains to exhort the Ear to delight in harmonious Sounds? No, the Order of Nature does here supersede all other Methods of Engagement, and why then should there be need of any Command to a *Rational* Soul to love *God?* Does not an intelligible Good bear the same proportion to a reasonable Nature, as a sensible Good does to Sense; and is not God the same to the Soul, as Musick is to the Ear, or as Light to the Eye? Yes certainly, and infinitely more: For these things, tho they are the *proper* Goods of their respective Powers, yet they are not wholly commensurate, and fully adjusted to their Capacities; whence it is that *the Eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the Ear with hearing.* But now God is not only the proper Good of the Soul (as Light is of the Eye) but is withal a Good so transcendently excellent as to be able to fill the whole Capacity of its intellectual Powers. The Good of *his* sublime Nature is more than commen-

menſurate to the moſt ſtretch'd Appetite of *ours*; nay, were our Capacity infinite, he would be ſufficient to fill it; for he fills his own, and is infinitely happy in himſelf. And what need then of a Command to a rational Creature to love its proper Good, and a Good ſo infinitely lovely?

But for ſatisfaction to this, 'tis to be conſider'd, firſt, that as in *Geometry* ſome plain and obvious Propoſitions are laid down not ſo much for the ſake of their own Diſcovery, as in order to further Theory, which, as a Superſtructure is to be rais'd upon thoſe Foundations; ſo in *Morality* and Divinity ſome practical Propoſitions or Precepts, tho in themſelves never ſo clear and evident, muſt yet be ſet down, if 'twere only for the ſake of Method and Order, and to lay a Bottom for what is to be further built upon thoſe Principles. And accordingly the Love of God being the fundamental Principle of all natural Religion and Virtue, or (as our Lord here terms it) the *firſt and great Commandment*, upon which all the Duties of the firſt Table do immediately,

diately, and those of the second remotely depend, it was very requisite that there should be an express Precept concerning it, tho it be never so *evident* that we *ought* to love God, and withal never so *necessary* and unavoidable that we *should*.

Besides, 'tis also secondly to be consider'd, that what does here more principally and more directly fall under the Precept, is not the *Act* of loving God in general, but the special *degree* and manner of that Act, that it be with the whole Power and full Capacity of the Man. Now tho it be of it self so plain and evident that God is to be loved, and withal so natural and necessary, that we should love him in some degree or other, yet neither is it so plain nor so necessary that we should love him up to the degree here specifi'd, with the whole Weight and Stress of our Love. This is not a Proposition of so bright an evidence as to shine forth by its own Light, but requires a Train of Argument and Consequence to make it appear reasonable, and must be proved in a way of Science and Demonstration.

monſtration. It was indeed below the Dignity and Majeſty of the Supreme Law-giver to do that, but therefore it was the more neceſſary for him to uſe his Authority, to make it matter of expreſs Precept, and to lay it as an eternal Law upon every rational Spirit that comes into being, *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul, and with all thy mind.*

The great Difficulty of this great Commandment, next to the *Practiſing* of it, is how to *Underſtand* it; and therefore I ſhall firſt of all inquire into the true Senſe and Import of it, and then into the Reaſon and Bottom upon which it ſtands.

As to the *Senſe*, I think the higheſt that is generally put upon theſe Words amounts to no more than this, That God is to be the prime and principal Object of our Love and Delight; That we are to love him in a *Superlative* way, above all other things whatſoever, ſo as to loſe any Good, or ſuffer any Evil rather than commit the leaſt Sin againſt him; That we are always to prefer him in our Love, chuſing

to obey him rather than Man, and to please him rather than satisfie our own Will, and to enjoy him rather than any worldly or carnal Pleasure, saying with the Psalmist, *Thy Loving-kindness is better than Life*, and with the Church in the *Canticles*, *Thy Love is better than Wine*.

And if our Love be thus order'd, if we stand thus affected towards God, we are then allowed according to the common Opinion to Love *Creatures*, to delight and solace our selves in them, to unite our Souls in some measure to them, and to reckon them among the props and stays of our life, and as the Ingredients of its present Happiness. Nor is there any harm presumed in all this, still provided that God be uppermost in our Hearts, have the largest share in our Affections, and be seated upon the *Throne* of the Soul, who though permitted to love other things, is yet to look upon God as her greatest Good, and accordingly to reserve her brightest and purest flame for his Altar; to love him with the choice, with the flower of her Affection, and be ready to part with

with any other good when it once comes in competition with the Love of God.

In this I think I speak the sense of the common Interpreters, who for want of a suitable Foundation could not well carry the Building higher, but were forced to take up with an Explication far below the express Letter of the Text, and to make this to be all that was signified by loving God with all the heart, with all the soul, and with all the mind, that we love him chiefly and principally, *best* and *most*. Sure they could not but be sensible that herein they did not rise up to the Letter of the Text, which manifestly requires a more elevated sense: But they could not advance higher without building in the Air; and were therefore forced to cramp the sense of this great Commandment, and to put such a Construction upon it, not as the express Words of it *require*, but as their Hypothesis would *bear*.

I say as their Hypothesis would bear; for the Hypothesis these Men

go upon, seems to be this; They suppose that other things besides God are truly and properly the Goods of the Soul, and contribute as efficient Causes to its happiness: That sensible Objects contain in themselves somewhat answerable to what we feel by their Occasion, and are withal the proper Causes of such our Sensations: That the Bodies that surround us do really act in and upon us, not only by making impression upon our *Bodies*, and striking upon our Organs of *Sense*, but also by raising and exciting those Sensations our Spirits are conscious of, so as to be the true efficient Causes of our *Pleasure* and our *Pain*: That the Fire gives us that sentiment of Heat which we feel when we approach it: and, That Wine causes in us that pleasing Taste which we feel when we drink it: And the like.

Now I confess, if this *Hypothesis* be true, if sensible Objects do really act upon our Souls, and are the proper efficient Causes of those pleasing Sensations which we feel there, then 'twill necessarily follow, that a certain portion of my Love is due to these sensi-

ſenſible Objects: for, if theſe Objects produce Pleaſure in me, then they do me good, they perfect my Being, and render it more happy; and if they do me good, then in their proportion they are my good; and if they are in any degree my good, then they are ſo far lovely; and if they are any way lovely, then ſo far they ought to be loved. But now, if ſome part of our Love be due to ſenſible Objects (as upon this *Hypotheſis* it is) then 'tis impoſſible that God ſhould have a right to *all* of it; and conſequently, to love him with all the heart, and all the ſoul, and all the mind, can ſignifie no more than to love him principally and above all, to give him the *Preference* in our Love. I ſay the *Preference*, for it ſeems the Creatures put in for a ſhare; and if they have a part, 'tis impoſſible that God ſhould have the whole: they muſt then both go ſharers in our Affection, and the only Privilege which God can claim upon this *Hypotheſis*, is, to have the *largeſt* ſhare in our Love.

Whether this *Hypotheſis* be true or no, ſhall be conſider'd in its proper place;

place; in the mean while it may ſerve as a ſtrong Preſumption, that it is not, that the Explication which is founded upon it falls ſo very ſhort of the literal Emphaſis of the Text, *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul, and with all thy mind.* But is it to love God at this rate, to love him only principally and more than any thing elſe? Does this exhauſt the ſenſe of this great Commandment? Can he be ſaid with any tolerable ſenſe to love God with all his heart, all his ſoul, and all his mind, that only loves him above other things, at the ſame time allowing other things a ſhare in his Love? Can he be ſaid to love God with *all* his Love that loves him only with a *Part*? What though that Part be the larger Part, 'tis but a Part ſtill; and is a *Part* the *Whole*? What Logick, or what Grammar, will indure this?

I think it therefore very evident, that the Words of this great Law do call for a higher ſenſe. And what can *that* be ſhort of this (which indeed is what in ordinary conſtruction they import) that we ought to love God not

not only with the Beſt and Moſt, but with the Whole of our Affection; that we love him *intirely*, not only with an integrity of Parts, but with an integrity of Degrees; that we love him not only with every Capacity, Paſſion, and Faculty, with the Underſtanding ſuppoſe, Will and Affections (here expreſt by *Heart*, *Soul*, and *Mind*) but in every degree of every Power, with all the Latitude of our Will, and with the whole Poſſibility of our Souls; that we beſtow on him not only the higheſt degree of our Love, but every degree of it, the *Whole?* In one Word, that God be not only the principal, but the only Object of our Love. This indeed is a Sacrifice worthy of a God, when the Whole Man is offer'd up to him as a Burnt Offering: And no leſs can he be ſuppoſed to require from us by vertue of this great Law, when he bids us to love him with all our Heart, with all our Soul, and with all our Mind. In the ſame Senſe therefore as 'tis ſaid, *Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve*; ſo is this great Commandment to be underſtood, as if it were ſaid, Thou

ſhalt

ſhalt love the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou deſire. For Love is the true natural Worſhip of the Soul, and as we are to *Worſhip* none but God, ſo are we to *Love* none but God.

But to make this appear *intelligible Divinity*, we muſt look about for a proper Ground for it in *Philoſophy*, it being neceſſary that we lay our Foundation as much deeper than the Common Interpreters have done, as we intend to build higher. Which leads me to the ſecond general Part of my Undertaking; namely, to conſider the Reaſon and Bottom upon which this great Commandment ſtands.

The Senſe of it I have already explain'd, and made to be the ſame with what the *Letter* of the Text imports; namely, That our whole Affection be placed upon God, and that we love him ſo intirely as to love none but him. I come now to juſtifie this Senſe, which I ſhall endeavour to eſtabliſh upon this double Baſis in general.

I. That God is the only Author or Cauſe of our Love.

II. That

II. That he is alſo the only proper Object of it.

Firſt, I conſider that God is the only Author or Cauſe of our Love. By Love here I underſtand that original Weight, Bent or Endeavour whereby the Soul of Man ſtands inclined and is moved forwards to Good in general or *Happineſs*. Now that this Impreſſion is from God, and that 'tis he alone that has put this *Biaſs* into our Natures, I think demonſtrable ſeveral ways; but at preſent ſhall only conſider that this Motion of the Soul is a neceſſary Adherent to our Beings, ſuch as we were never without, and ſuch as we can never put off; ſuch as is all over invincible and irreſiſtable. The Soul of Man muſt not pretend to the leaſt degree of Liberty here (for indeed it being impoſſible that our Love to Good in general ſhould be bad, it was not fit it ſhould be free) but is altogether paſſive in this Motion, and moves no otherwiſe than as ſhe is moved. She has no more Command over this Motion than ſhe has over the Motion of the *Heart* or *Pulſe*, which ſhews it to be equally *Vital* and Natural,

tural, and of the very essential Make and Constitution of our Being. Well then, I demand, Is this natural necessary Motion from our *Selves* or from *God?* If from our Selves, How comes it then to pass, that we cannot command it, or stop it? Had we Power to produce what we have not Power to govern? or, is it more difficult to govern than to produce? No certainly, were we the Authors of this Motion we should have some Power over it, and be able to manage and controul it; which since we cannot do, we may well conclude, that 'tis not a thing of our Production; and that though it be *in* us, yet 'tis not *of* or *from* our Selves. And whence then must it be but from God? Who else could kindle in our Natures such an unquenchable Flame? Who else could fix such a strong *Spring* in our Souls, and actuate our Beings with such a mighty Energy? And who should be the Author of what is *Natural* and Necessary in us, but he that is the Author of our *Natures?* Love is the same in the Moral and Intellectual World as Motion is in the Natural; and as we make God to be the Author of Natural Motion, so there is as much reason

reaſon to make him the Author of our Love. But now if God be the only Author and Cauſe of our Love, has not he then the ſole Right and Title to it? and has not he alſo a Right to it all? This may ſeem perhaps at firſt glance, to be a captious and ſurprizing way of Arguing; but conſider it well; Has not God a Right to all that he *produces?* What is it that gives him a Right to the whole World, but his Production of it? Why has God a Right to me, but becauſe I am his Creature? Upon what Account has he a Right to all my Powers and Faculties, and to all the ſervice of them, but becauſe he produces them, and ſuſtains them; becauſe, *in him we Live, Move, and have our Being?* But now if God does as much produce my *Love* as he does my *Being*, then, Why has he not as much Right to my Love as to any other part of my Nature? And if God only has a Right to my Love, and a Right to it all, as having produced it all, then 'tis evident, that all of it ought to be fix'd upon him, and that he has great Injury and Injuſtice done him whenever any the leaſt degree of it goes

goes besides him. Indeed were there any part or degree of our Love which God did not produce, That we might give away from him, That we might bestow upon a Creature; but if God be the Author of it all, if there be not one degree of our Love but what he produces, 'tis highly just and reasonable that he should have it all; and we cannot let the least Spark of this sacred Fire light upon the Creature without so far defrauding the Creator.

Especially if we consider further the Manner how, and the End for which God produces our Love. I now suppose, as a thing already proved, that all the Motion that the Soul has towards Good comes from God; but how does God move us towards Good? Whither is it that God does then direct this Motion? He himself indeed is the *Author* of it, but what is the *Term* of it? to what does God move us? Our corrupt Imagination may perhaps be ready here to suggest that God moves us to Good by moving us towards the *Creature*. But stay, Would such a *Term* of this Motion

tion be worthy of its *Cause?* Can God move us towards the Creature? Can he move us from himself? Can he act for a Creature? Can he make the Creature his End? Does not God make all things for himself? Does he not always act for himself? Is he not always his own End? Has not this the Evidence of a First Principle, That God acts only for himself? We must therefore of necessity conclude, That as God is the Author of this Motion, so he is the Natural End and Term of it too; and that he moves us to Good no otherwise, than by moving us towards himself. We must conclude, that God is the true great *Magnet* of our Souls; that he continually draws and moves them, not from, but to himself, as being both *their*, and his *own* great End. We must conclude, that God intended himself as the sole Object of the Love which he produced; that he has impress a Motion upon our Intellectual Heart, only to incline it toward himself; and that as the whole Motion of our Love is from God, so it has no other Term than God in the Order and Institution of Nature.

Well then, if the Case be thus, if God moves us to Good by moving us towards himself: Is it not then a transgressing this Order and Institution of Nature? Is it not an abuse of that Motion of Love which God causes in us, and which he directs towards himself, to bestow any part of it upon a Creature, to love any thing besides God? Do we not then Cross the Order of Nature, and resist the Will of its great Author? Do we not then hinder his Act, and put a Bar to his Motion within us? Nay, do we not then act against the Constitution of our own Frame, and run Counter to the great Bias of our Natures? What, does he that gave us our Beings, shew also so great a Concern for their *Perfection*, as to impress upon them a continual Motion towards himself; and shall we be so ungrateful as well as unjust, as to stop short, and take up with a Creature? We ought certainly to follow the Order, and conform to the Will of God; and since he has order'd the Motion of our Love to no less Noble an End than himself, 'tis evident that thither only we ought to *direct*, and there only to *fix* our Love. And

And that we do not at all ſtrain the Senſe of this Commandment, by ſuppoſing it thus to oblige us to Love the Lord our God with *all the Heart, Soul and Mind*, in the ſtricteſt Emphaſis of the Phraſe, will yet further appear, if we examin the other general ground upon which it ſtands; and conſider

Secondly, That as God is the only Author and Cauſe of our Love, ſo is he alſo the only proper Object of it. It is moſt clear and certain, that God only is to be loved, if God be the only proper Object of our Love; and 'tis as clear, that he is the only proper Object of our Love, if he only be our Good; and 'tis as clear that he only is our Good, if he only does us Good, if he only perfects and betters our Beings; and 'tis as clear that he only does ſo, if he be the only true Cauſe of all our Pleaſure, of all thoſe grateful Senſations whereof we are Conſcious, and wherewith we are affected. I ſay if he be: But here lies the Point to be debated. And 'tis a great Point indeed; for upon this Hinge the whole Weight of the preſent Theory turns, and the whole Iſſue of it will depend.

Here therefore let us ſtop and fix, and with all poſſible heed and attentiveneſs enquire after the true Cauſe of our *Pleaſure*. For wherever we find that, there to be ſure we ſhall alſo find the only proper Object of our *Love*.

That in the uſe of Bodies, and in converſing with Senſible Objects, we find Pleaſure, we learn by *Experience*, but whence this Pleaſure comes, and what is its true efficient Cauſe, 'tis our *Reaſon* only that can inform us. And yet ſhe has had the ill Fortune to be leaſt of all conſulted in this matter. It is generally thought, that the Pleaſure we feel in the Uſe, and by the Intervention of Bodies is cauſed in us by the Bodies themſelves. That the Fire for inſtance, produces in us Senſation of Warmth, that the Sun produces in us the Senſation of Light, that the Fruits of the Earth Communicate to us the Senſations of the pleaſant Taſtes, and the like. Theſe Bodies are firſt ſuppoſed to have ſomething like theſe Senſations in themſelves, and then to produce them in us. Thus Fire is ſuppoſed to be endued with the quality of Heat in it

ſelf,

ſelf, and then to impart this *quality* to us; to be firſt Hot in its own Nature, and then to make us ſo. This has been all along the Current unqueſti-on'd Apprehenſion, not only of the Vulgar who think in haſte, and determin of things only as they appear to Senſe, but of the more inquiſitive and reaſoning part of Mankind. And though ſome of the Modern *Reformers* of Philoſophy have thought fit to reject the *former* part of the Suppoſition, *viz.* That Bodies have in themſelves ſomething anſwerable to the Senſations which we feel in the uſe of them; yet they generally retain the *Later*, *viz.* That they produce and cauſe thoſe Senſations in us, and do accordingly allow, that Fire (for inſtance) is *Eminently* and *Potentially*, though not *Formally* hot, that is, That though it has not any thing reſembling the Senſation of Heat in it ſelf, yet it has a Power to produce ſuch a Senſation in thoſe that ſhall approach it. This they not only *allow*, but *contend* for. For whereas according to the Old Diſtinction, ſome things were ſaid to be both Formally and Eminently hot too (as Fire) and ſome only eminently,

(as the Sun) the Moderns have ventured to cut off the former part of the Distinction, and reduce all to the later, by supposing all Bodies that we call Hot, to be so only *Eminently* and *Potentially*, as they are productive of Heat in us. And by this they explain the *Phenomenon* of Heat in Bodies, supposing it to be nothing else in the Bodies themselves, but only a Power of producing such a Sensation. But then by this they manifestly hold that they do produce it; and I know but of * One amongst them that thinks any *Otherwise*, or any *Farther*. They thought, it seems, they had sufficiently reform'd from the Vulgar Philosophy, by shaking off the former part of their Hypothesis, That Bodies have in themselves some inherent Quality analogous to our Sensations; so much they saw must be rejected. But they could not tell how to deny the later part, and do therefore hold, that Bodies do produce in us such and such Sensations, though they have nothing of a Similar Nature with them in themselves.

* Mr. *Malebranche.*

Very

Very good. But were they determin'd to this Perſuaſion by the Moments of Reaſon? I think 'tis to be doubted whether they ever ſo much as Conſulted her in *this* part of the Queſtion. They ſeem here rather to have hearkned to the Illuſions of Senſe and Imagination, ſuggeſting to them, that becauſe ſuch Bodily Impreſſions are accompanied with ſuch Senſations, therefore the later were the effect of the former. This is the only reaſon that is, or can be pretended in behalf of this Common Preſumption. But is this a Warrantable Concluſion? Does it follow, that becauſe ſuch Senſations do accompany ſuch Bodily Impreſſions, that therefore thoſe Bodily Impreſſions are the Cauſe of thoſe Senſations? Can we argue from the *Concomitancy* of one thing with another, to the *Cauſal Dependance* of one thing upon another? 'Tis certain that we cannot; and 'tis therefore as certain, that the Reaſon pretended for the Common Hypotheſis, is indeed no Reaſon at all, but a *Prejudice* rather than a *Reaſon.*

Now though it be very unworthy of a Philoſopher, and withall a very great let and intanglement to him in his Enquiry after Truth, to aſſert any one thing without clear and full Evidence: Yet this is neither the only, nor the greateſt defect of this Concluſion. For as there is no ſufficient Reaſon for it, ſo there is plain inconteſtable Reaſon againſt it.

Had our late Improvers of Science diſregarded the importunate Clamours of Senſe and Imagination in this later point as they did in the former, and conſulted only the Reſponſes of *inward Truth*, they would have ſeen as much reaſon to reject the Notion of Bodies, being able to excite Senſations in us, as to reject that of their having ſome certain *Qualities* like thoſe Senſations in themſelves. Nay, they would have ſeen, that the very ſame Reaſons that induced them to the one, ought alſo to have determin'd them to the other. For why is it that they will not allow that Bodies have in them ſomething like our Senſations, particularly that in Fire there is any ſuch thing as a Quality of Heat, anſwerable to what we

we call Heat in our selves: I say, why is it that they will not allow this, but because they reason'd with themselves to this effect: There is nothing conceivable in Bodies but *Magnitude*, *Figure*, and *Motion?* For instance, there is nothing in Fire but certain Particles of Matter so and so sized, so and so figured, and so and so moved. Examin your Idea of Fire a thousand times over, and this is all you will ever be able to find in it. I say find *in* it: For 'tis true indeed, when you come near you find something more *from* it, you find withall a Sensation of *Heat*, either pleasing or painful according as your distance is. But you have no more reason thence to conclude, that there is such a Quality as Heat, resembling what you feel, in the Fire, than you have to conclude *Pain* to be in a *Needle* or a *Thorn*. When you approach the Fire you feel Heat, and when you prick your Hand with a Needle you feel Pain; but as you *do* not therefore fancy any such thing as Pain to be in the Needle, so neither *ought* you to suppose any such thing as Heat to be in the Fire. That indeed which makes Men more apt to do so

in

in this Case than in the other is, because the Particles of the Fire are too Minute to be discern'd by the Eye, and so Men not perceiving the *Mechanalness* of its Operation, are apt to have recourse to some inherent *Quality*; whereas the Thorn and Needle are of a Visible Bulk, and we see how they pierce and wound our Flesh. But did Men as clearly see the Particles of the Fire, with their Size, Figure and Motion, and with what a Spring they are shot and darted forth upon us, and how like so many fine Needles or Launces they enter and divide the parts of our Body, they would no more Dream of any such thing as *Heat* in the *Fire*, than they do of *Pain* in a *Needle*, and would think it every whit as odd and improper to say, Fire is *Hot*, as to say a Needle is *Painful*. And though as the Case now stands, they are apt to fancy the contrary; yet 'tis plain, that this is only an illusion of Sense, Reason in the mean while constantly assuring us, that there can be nothing in Fire but Particles of Matter of such a Size and Shape, and in such a degree of Motion: And withall, that we cannot ascribe such a thing

as

as Heat to the Fire, answerable to that Sensation in our selves, without ascribing to it also *Thought* and *Perception* at the same time, which would be of intolerable Consequence.

Upon these, and such like Considerations, the Reformers of Philosophy, I presume, thought it necessary to reject the former part of the Vulgar Hypothesis, that Bodies have in them some certain Qualities answerable to our Sensations. And no doubt but that they reason'd upon clear and distinct Idea's. But will not the very same Considerations be of equal force to disprove the later part too, that Bodies do *cause* and *produce* Sensations in us? For if there be nothing in Bodies but *Motion* and *Figure*, if they are capable of no other Modification, then whatever they do, they must do it by the Motion, and by the Figure of their Parts; there being nothing besides supposed to be in them. If therefore they cause our Sensations, 'tis by their Figure and their Motion that they must do it. But can Motion or Figure produce a Sensation, a Sentiment of the Mind, a *Thought*? 'Tis

hard,

hard, extreme hard, to conceive how one Motion should beget another. But can it produce an Effect more Noble and Excellent, and of an Order so very much higher than it self? Can it produce a Thought? Is there any Proportion between such a Cause and such an Effect; between Motion and Thinking, between an Affection of a Body, and a Sentiment of the Soul? Or is there any proportion between such a *particular* Motion, and such a *particular* Sensation; between that Motion, suppose, that is follow'd with Pleasure, and Pleasure; or between that Motion which is follow'd with Pain, and Pain? Is that Motion which *de facto* is accompanied with Pleasure, more apt of its self and in its own Nature, to produce that Sensation rather than Pain? Or may not that very Motion which is *de facto* follow'd with Pleasure, be as well the Occasion of Pain for any Proportion, Affinity, or Natural Connexion that is in the things themselves? 'Tis most certain that it may. For Pleasure and Pain are Sensations of a wholly different, nay contrary kind. They differ as much as any two things can do. They

They differ not only Eſſentially, but as Contraries, as extreme Oppoſites. And they do almoſt make their *Subjects* do ſo, the Soul that is in Pleaſure differing almoſt *Specifically* from her ſelf when ſhe is in Pain. But now there is not the like difference between the reſpective Motions ſuppoſed to produce them; They differ only Accidentally and Gradually. That Motion of the Fire which occaſions Pleaſure, differs only in Degree from that which occaſions Pain. Whence it is evident, that theſe Cauſes are not in themſelves equivalent to their Effects, nor have any Natural Relation to them, but are indifferent to either, as being diſproportionate to both. That the ſame Motion that is now attended with Pleaſure, might as well (for any particularity in the thing it ſelf) be attended with Pain, there being as great diſproportion between theſe particular Motions and their particular Senſations, as between Motion and Senſation in general.

What is here ſaid of *Motion*, is as applicable to *Figure*; and ſince theſe are

are the only two Modifications Body is capable of, and these hold no proportion with our Sensations, 'tis plain that our Sensations ought not, cannot be ascribed to Bodies as their proper Efficient Causes. The sum of the Argument resolves into this. There is nothing in Bodies but Figure and Motion, if therefore Bodies do produce or cause our Sensations, they must do it by Figure and Motion. But they cannot do it by Figure and Motion; therefore Bodies cannot produce our Sensations.

And whereas it is again further concluded, that Bodies have not in themselves any Quality resembling the Sensations which we feel at their Presence, because this would oblige us to allow them capable of *Thought*, which in Reason we cannot do: Is not the very same Consideration of equal force to prove also, that they do not *produce* our Sensations? Does not the same Want and Incapacity of Thought infer the one as well as the other? Bodies have no Thought, therefore they *have* no Sensations; Bodies have no Thought, therefore they *produce* none:

Is

Is not the laſt Conſequence as good as the firſt? Without all queſtion it is For how can a Thoughtleſs Principle produce a Thought? That is, how can the Effect be above the Order of its Cauſe? If it may, then any thing may produce any thing, and any thing may follow from any thing, which would overturn all the Order both of *Science* and of *Nature*.

And if further, it be reckon'd ſuch an Abſurdity that *Matter* ſhould *Think* (as it is by thoſe who to avoid this inconvenience, deny that there is any thing in Bodies reſembling our Senſations) then is it not a much greater abſurdity to ſuppoſe it capable of *producing* Thought? And are not thoſe very inconſiſtent with their own Principles, who ſcruple to allow to Bodies a Capacity of Thinking, and upon that ground reject the Old Doctrin of *Qualities*, as they ſignifie ſomething in Bodies Correſponding to our Senſations; and yet at the ſame time will allow them a Power of producing that Thought in us which they think they are not capable of in themſelves? Is not this a very great inconſiſtency, eſ-

pecially

pecially for Men of Principles and Demonſtration to be guilty of? For certainly it is a great deal more to be able to *produce* Thought, than to be meerly *capable* of it. I my ſelf am capable of Thought, but I do not find I have a Power to produce it, not ſo much as in my ſelf, much leſs in another. If therefore we deny Matter what is Leſs, we ought to be the more Cautious how we allow it what is Greater; and if it be ſuch an Abſurdity that Bodies ſhould be capable of Thought, then much more abſurd is it, that they ſhould have a Power to produce it.

And thus have I ſhewn that the very ſame Reaſons which prove that Bodies have not any Qualities in them like our Senſations, do alſo prove that they do neither produce Senſations in us, and conſequently that our Modern Philoſophers who upon thoſe Grounds rejected the former part, ought upon the very ſame Grounds to have rejected the latter too. And as they ought, ſo they eaſily might. They had the right Thread in their Hands, but 'twas their Unhappineſs

to

to let it go, and not to pursue the Clue of their own Reasonings.

What I have hitherto argued from the *Principles* upon which those Men built their Conclusion, may also be as well argued from the *Conclusion* it self built upon those Principles. Their Conclusion is, that Bodies have not in themselves any such inherent Qualities as Correspond to our Sensations. Well then, if they have not any thing like Sensation in themselves, how shall they be able to produce them in us? Can they communicate what they are not possest of? Can they cause Sensations in us which they have not, which they feel not, which they know not, and which they cannot ever cause in themselves? They themselves are here supposed utterly void and uncapable of all Sensation; but if they can produce it in us, why may they not be as well able to produce it in themselves? But this must not be; the *Conclusion* is, that they have not any thing like those Sensations in themselves; whence I may justly infer, that they are as little capable of producing them in us.

But besides, Can Bodies act upon Spirits? so indeed they must do, if it be true that they produce our Sensations, since the Soul is the only proper Subject of all Perception. But is this possible? Is not Spirit supposed to *penetrate* Body? Well, if so, then it may coexist with it in the same determinate point of Space; if so, then it will not resist it, and if so, then it will not be capable of suffering by it, or receiving any impression from it, it being impossible that Bodies should act upon that which does not resist their Action. The less the resistance is, the less always is the Impression (as appears from that little force the strongest Wind has upon a Body of a *Conical* Figure) and consequently where there is no resistance at all, there can be no Impression at all. And therefore since Spirits make no resistance against Bodies, it is not possible that Bodies should have any Action, or make any Impression upon Spirits. The most that can be allow'd to Bodies, is to be able to act upon other Bodies, either by moving all their parts at once out of their place, or by changing the Order and Situation of the Parts among them-

themſelves; but how they ſhould be capable of acting upon Spirits, upon a ſort of Beings that make no reſiſtance againſt them, is what I can neither Conceive, or think Conceivable.

Suppoſe I ſhould fling a Stone at a Spirit, ſhould I hurt it, do you think? No you'l ſay, not a *mere* Spirit; but ſhould that Spirit be in a *Body*, you would hurt it then. But pray why ſo? What's the meaning of this? Why if it were in a Body? If the Stone cannot hurt it when there is nothing that interpoſes, it will be leſs able to do ſo when there is ſo thick a Wall between. But if it be the Stone that properly hurts it when 'tis in the Body, then why can it not as well do it when 'tis out of the Body? It ſhould by right be better able then, as I can more eaſily wound a Naked Man, than a Man Clad in Armour. But this plainly diſcovers the Bottom of the Myſtery; this clearly ſhews, that 'tis not the Stone that ſtrictly and properly ſpeaking, *Cauſes* the Senſation of Pain in the Spirit (for then it would be as well, nay better able to hurt a *ſeparate* Spirit than an *imbody'd*

one) but that all that the Stone truly does is only to adminiſter the *Occaſion* of this Sentation to the Spirit by what it impreſſes upon its Body, but that ſome other Being is the true Efficient *Cauſe* of it; of which further by and by.

In the mean while I further conſider that if Bodies ſhould be allow'd to be the proper Cauſes of our Senſations, of that Pleaſure and that Pain which we feel at their Preſence and in their Uſe, then it would be in the power of Bodies to make us happy or miſerable, to reward or puniſh us, to perfect or to deteriorate our Condition; our well or ill being would depend upon them; conſequently they would be *above* us, ſo far above us as to be the true and proper Good, and the true and proper Evil of Man, and ſo would juſtly deſerve not only our Love and our Fear, our Gratitude and our Eſteem, but even our very Devotion and Veneration. We ought then to aſcribe our Good to the Bodies that ſurround us as well as to our *Own*, pay a Tribute of Praiſe to the Material World, and ſing a *Te Deum* to

to the Creation. We ought then to worſhip the Sun for giving us Light, the Fire, for affording us Heat, the Fruits of the Earth for delighting us with their pleaſing Taſts, and what not? There would be no part of the Material World ſo vile and mean (not even the very Earth we tread upon) but what upon this Suppoſition would be above our ſelves, and upon which we ſhould depend for our Happineſs and our Miſery, and would therefore challenge a ſhare in our Religious Acknowledgments. Theſe are moſt intolerable Conſequences, but ſuch as do inevitably follow upon the Suppoſition of making Bodies the Cauſes of thoſe Senſations which accompany the Preſence and Uſe of them, and therefore I think it neceſſary to deny (however I may incounter the Prejudice of Imagination in ſo doing) that they are the true and proper Cauſes of thoſe Senſations.

But to ſtrike a little more light yet into this Matter, let us conſider the Operation of ſome particular Body. I finding my ſelf cold, draw near to the *Fire*, that is, to a Body conſiſting of a

great Number of very ſmall Minute Particles, of ſharp-pointed Figures, variouſly agitated, and in a moſt rapid and impetuous Motion. Upon my Approach I find my troubleſom Senſation of Cold to abate and by degrees to be exchanged for a more grateful one, which we call Heat. This is the Effect that I experiment upon my coming near the Fire. But pray what does the Fire do to me? Why to ſpeak properly it does nothing to *me*, that is, to my *Spirit*. But what is it that it does to my *Body*? Why it variouſly moves and agitates the Parts of it, and if near enough will divide and ſeparate one Part from another, and ſo diſſolve my Bodily Frame. This Fire does, and this is *all* it does or can do directly and properly as an *Efficient Cauſe*. Well, but though this be all that Fire *does*, yet this is not all that is *done*, I feel ſomething more at my Approach to it. Yes, you'l ſay I feel the Impreſſion which the Fire makes upon my Body. No, that's your miſtake, I do not feel the *Impreſſion* made upon my Body (for how can I feel what is done to another thing?) but I feel a certain *Senſation* in

in my Soul either of Pleaſure or Pain, between which and that Bodily Impreſſion there is no manner of Similitude or Proportion. The *Senſation* is that which I *feel*. But that is not what the Fire *does*, whoſe whole Efficiency being only Motion and Figure can have Effect no further than upon my Body. But the Senſation which I feel is not in my Body, but in my Soul, and conſequently is not of the Fire's producing, but muſt be aſcribed to ſome other Cauſe. In ſhort, that which moves the Parts of my Body is one thing, and that which affects my Soul with Pleaſure or Pain is another; the Fire may do the *Former*, but it cannot do the *Later*.

But though the Fire cannot directly and immediately operate upon the Soul ſo as to affect it with any Senſation, yet may it not mediately and indirectly by Vertue of that *Union* that is between *Soul* and *Body*? So indeed it is commonly thought, and many a Learned Man has ſate down with this Anſwer as with a very full and ſatisfactory Account of the Buſineſs. There is they ſay a very cloſe

Tie and Union between the Soul and Body, and by this means Fire comes to operate upon the Soul, and to give it Pleasure or Pain, and all by Vertue of this Union. But for Fire to operate upon the Soul by reason of the *Union* between that and the Body is such a loose indeterminate way of speaking, that as it clears nothing, so 'tis neither capable of having any Answer applied to it, till it be drawn out of its Ambiguity, and reduced to some certain Meaning. I suppose therefore that they who offer this Account, if they intend any thing certain and distinct by it, must mean one of these Three things.

Either that the Fire by the Motion which it imparts to my Body makes it to act upon my Soul.

Or, that there is such a mutual Connexion or *Natural Sympathy* between these two Substances Soul and Body, that what is done to the Body will be felt by the Soul.

Or lastly, that there is such a *Positive* Law or Order establish'd between them

them by the Author of Nature, that ſuch Impreſſions made upon the Body ſhall be ordinarily followed by ſuch Senſations in the Soul.

As for the firſt of theſe ways which ſuppoſes the Fire by the Motion which it communicates to my Body to make my *Body* to act upon my Soul, this will reſolve into an immediate Action of Body upon Spirit, which has been confuted already. For though the Fire be here ſuppoſed to act *mediately*, yet my Body is ſuppoſed to act *immediately* upon my Soul. But now it is no more poſſible that my Body ſhould act upon my Soul, than that any *other* Body ſhould. And the ſame Reaſons that prove it impoſſible that Body in general ſhould be able to act upon Spirit, prove it alſo impoſſible that any particular Bodies ſhould.

As to the Second, which ſuppoſes ſuch a natural connexion and ſympathy between theſe Two Subſtances Soul and Body, that what is done to the Body will be felt by the Soul, I deny that there is or can be any ſuch connexion

nexion in the nature of the things themselves; for (not to argue at present from the vast disproportion between Body and Spirit) are not the Soul and Body *Two distinct* Substances? And can any Two things that are really distinct one from the other, be so united or connected together in their own natures, that an impression made upon the one, shall by the same act affect the other? Is there any such natural connexion between Body and Body, or Spirit and Spirit? much less then between *Body* and *Spirit*. Do the Figures which are cut upon the Bark of a Tree wound my Body? Or does the pain or grief which another Soul indures by way of natural connexion, affect mine? Is *another's* Pain *mine*? I may indeed make it my own in a moral sense, by interessing my self in it, but then 'tis not another's Pain that I indure (unless figuratively speaking) but my own. There is no natural sympathy between my Spirit and any other Spirit in the World, nor am I concerned in any change that is wrought in it, whether for Happiness or Misery, any further than

than I pleaſe to concern my ſelf. Much leſs then can any Impreſſion made upon my Body by way of *Natural Sympathy*, affect my Soul. Yes, but you'l ſay they are ſo intimately *united*, that the one partakes in the other's Sufferings. But if by *united*, you mean that there is any ſuch Connexion or Dependance between them in the Nature of the things themſelves, you beg the thing in Queſtion, and which I ſhall never grant, *viz.* That Bodies and Spirits (or indeed any two Subſtances) are or can be ſo united, that one ſhould feel the Impreſſion made upon the other. But beſides, that which I feel is not the *Impreſſion* made upon my Body (as was obſerv'd before) but a *Senſation*, whether of Pleaſure or of Pain; between which and the Impreſſion, there is not the leaſt ſhadow of likeneſs or proportion. 'Tis common indeed to ſay, *we feel ſuch a Blow*, or *we feel ſuch a Wound*, but this muſt not be allow'd but in a popular Latitude; for to ſpeak ſtrictly and Philoſophically, 'tis not the Blow that we feel, but *Pain*; which being a Senſation of the Soul, is diſtinct from the Impreſſion made upon the Body;

and

and consequently the Soul cannot be said to feel what is done to the Body, (for it feels something else:) Nor can what is done to the Body, be the Cause of what the Soul feels.

By this it sufficiently appears, that the Fire cannot be truly said to operate upon the Soul by the *Mediation* of the Body in either of the two *former* ways: If then they will have the Fire to operate upon the Soul by virtue of its Union with the Body, they must be supposed to intend it in the third and last sense of the expression; namely, that there is such a *positive* Law or Order establish'd between them by the Author of Nature, that such Impressions made upon the Body, shall be follow'd by such Sensations in the Soul: Now I acknowledg, that this is a right Notion of the Union that is between Soul and Body, as resolving it not into a *Natural*, but a *Positive* Connexion and Dependance, it being impossible that two really distinct Substances, such as Body and Soul are, should be united together any otherwise. But then I deny that the Fire can be truly said to act upon the Soul

Soul by virtue of such an Union as this. And to say that it does, is in effect to give up the Cause, by granting the very thing hitherto contended for. To say that the Fire *thus* acts upon the Soul is implicitly to confess, that it does not truly act upon it at all, and to lead us directly to the proper Cause that *does*. For when you say that the Fire causes such a Sensation in the Soul by reason of that *Law*, that such Sensations shall follow such Impressions, (for this is what you are now supposed to understand by the *Union* of Soul and Body) 'tis plain that you ascribe the effect, not to the *Fire*, but to that *Law*, whatever it be. For if such a Sensation did naturally and directly follow such an Impression of the Fire as an Effect follows its proper Cause, then what need of any *Law* or *Order* to be establish'd, that such a Sensation should follow such an Impression? 'Tis plain therefore, that the Sensation produced in the Soul at the Impression of the Fire, is to be resolved into this *Law* as its proper Cause, and can depend upon the Impression no otherwise, than as an *Occasion*, or a *Condition* determining the Effi-

Efficiency of this Law. The Sensation indeed follows such an Impression, but because it only *therefore* follows it, because of that Law and Order establish'd that it should; 'tis the *Law*, not the *impression* of the Fire, that is the true Cause of the Sensation.

Well, but what is this *Law*? It must be something that executes it self, otherwise how shall it be secure of its effect? And what can that be, but the Will of God; and what is the Will of God, but God; who does all things by his Will, that is, by himself? So then according to this account 'tis *God* that is the true Efficient Cause of that Sensation, either of Pleasure or Pain which we feel at the impression of the Fire; and the Fire it self is so far from operating (as was supposed) upon the Soul by the *Mediation* of the *Body*, that 'tis God that acts upon the Soul by the *Mediation* of the *Fire*, which only serves as a Condition or Occasion to determin the act of God, the only true and proper Cause.

Is

Is then the Fire to be conſider'd only as bearing the part of a *Condition*, or an *Occaſion* to the Firſt Cauſe, does it *produce* or *effect* nothing? Yes, it may conſider'd as a *Cauſe* too, with reſpect to the impreſſion that is made upon the *Body*; but as to the Senſation which upon that impreſſion ariſes in the *Soul*, we can allow it to be no more than a Condition or Occaſion. The ſum is, there are three things of diſtinct Conſideration relating to the Fire, the Motion that is in the Fire it ſelf, the Impreſſion made upon my Body by that Motion, and the Senſation that follows in the Soul upon that Impreſſion. As to the Motion that is in the Fire it ſelf, therein conſiſts its proper Power, Force and Activity: As to the Impreſſion made upon my Body, that is the effect which it works by that Power; but as to the Senſation which follows in my Soul upon that Impreſſion, this does no way depend upon the Impreſſion of the Fire as its Efficient Cauſe, but is raiſed or produced in me by the Author of my Nature, by the occaſion of that Impreſſion, according to that general Law and Order he

he has establish'd, that such certain Sensations should follow upon such certain Impressions, as in the sequel I shall more directly shew.

I have hitherto shewn, both by General and by Particular Considerations, that *Bodies* are not the true proper Causes of our Sensations, of that Pleasure and that Pain, which by their intervention we feel, and which therefore they *seem*, and are generally *thought* to produce. And I have once or twice by way of Anticipation, glanc'd a little at the *True* Cause of all our Sensations, which I have intimated to proceed from the Author of our Natures. But this being not enough to Convince, I shall now attempt to offer some Rational Proof for the truth of what I have already but only *intimated* and *proposed*.

It will go a great way towards the Proof of this, that Bodies are not the true Causes of our Sensations, which is the reason that I have so largely and so nicely discours'd that Point. For they are the things to which Men are most apt to ascribe them, and that because they

they are the only things they ſee and have before them; and becauſe withall, 'tis upon their Impreſſion that our Senſations follow, whereupon by a kind of *Senſible Logick*, they are led to conclude that what they feel is really cauſed by them. And this hinders them from inquiring any *further*, or any *higher*. But now were this Prejudice of Senſe once removed, could Men once get over this Difficulty that their Senſations are not cauſed by Bodies, there would not be much Difficulty to perſuade them that they are cauſed by *God*. And therefore having already given in ſuch clear and full Evidence that Bodies do not cauſe our Senſations, I think the greateſt part of the Work is done, and that we may now preſume as a thing that will not be long a granting us, that God is the true and proper Cauſe of them.

But for a more Poſitive and particular Proof, I further conſider, that ſince *Body* is not the Cauſe of our Senſations, the Cauſe of them muſt of neceſſity be *Spirit*, all that *is* being included under one of theſe two. Well,

if Spirit, the Competition will be very narrow, for then it must be either our own Spirit, or some Angel or Demon, or God. Not our own Spirit. For if my own Spirit were the Cause of those Sensations which I feel at the Impressions which other Bodies make upon mine, it would then be in my Power to have those Sensations as well without the Impressions of Bodies as with them. I might then have the Sensation of Light without the Impression of the Sun, and the Sensation of Heat without Fire, and the Sensation of sweet Odours and Tasts without the Mediation of odorifick or sapid Bodies. For since these Bodies are supposed according to the Principles before laid down not to have any Concurrence by way of *Efficiency* in the Production of those Sensations, but only to serve as positive Conditions to determin the Action of that Cause (whatever it is) which does produce them, certainly it must be in the Power of that Cause to produce those Sensations without any such bodily Impressions, nay, though there were no such thing as Body in being. As he that made

made the Waters of *Marah* ſweet by throwing in of a Tree, might if he had ſo pleas'd, as well have made them ſweet without it.. And conſequently were I my ſelf *that* Cauſe, what ſhould hinder me from raiſing the Senſations I now feel as well *without* as *with* thoſe Impreſſions to which they are ordinarily annexed? But not finding in my ſelf ſuch a Power, I may reaſonably conclude that my Soul is not the Author of her own Senſations, but that ſhe is altogether *Paſſive* in them, and depends for the Production of them upon ſome other Cauſe.

And beſides, if I my ſelf were the Author of my own Senſations, then ſince I naturally and neceſſarily love *Pleaſure*; and as naturally and neceſſarily hate *Pain*, I ſhould never produce in my ſelf the Senſation of Pain, but always the Senſation of Pleaſure. And ſo would every one elſe in the World beſides, they would be always in Pleaſure and never in Pain, and then we ſhould have a merry World indeed. But this is not our Caſe, we feel Pain as well as Pleaſure, and we feel it always againſt our Wills, which is a

plain Argument that what we feel in our ſelves is not produced by our ſelves; but that we are in intire Subjection and dependence upon ſome other Being, in whoſe Power it is to make us happy or miſerable.

Well then, if it be not our own Spirit that is the Cauſe of our Senſations, the whole Diſpute will lie between ſome Angel or Demon, or God. But this Competition will ſoon be ended, by conſidering the Qualification that will be requiſite in that Cauſe which ſhall produce ſuch an Effect as this. Beſides that exact and thoroughly comprehenſive Knowledg that ſuch a Being muſt have of our Natures, of our whole Animal and Intellectual Frame, and that Effectual Power he muſt alſo have to work upon them, which we can hardly aſcribe to any other Being than him that made us, who ſeems only fitted both to underſtand and order his own Workmanſhip, I ſay beſides this, he muſt alſo be ſuppoſed to know the very critical *Moment* when ſuch and ſuch Bodies make Impreſſion upon ours, and he muſt alſo know critically

cally the *Degree* of that Impreſſion, and he muſt alſo know exactly the very inſtant when the Impreſſion *ceaſes*. He muſt know the Moment of the Impreſſion, that he may know when to produce the Senſation. He muſt know the Degree of the Impreſſion that he may know how to proportion the Senſation. And he muſt know exactly the Moment when the Impreſſion ceaſes, that he may know when to ſtop and ſuſpend his Operation, that ſo he may not continue the Senſation after the Impreſſion is over. As for example, that Being whoever he is that produces in me the Senſation of Heat as often as I draw near the Fire, muſt be ſuppoſed to know exactly when I do ſo, that he may know how to *time* that Senſation, and he muſt know the critical Degree of the Fire's Impreſſion that he may know how to *temper* and *proportion* that Senſation, that he may not *burn* me when by the Impreſſion he ſhould only *warm* me, and he muſt alſo know the very Inſtant when I go from the Fire, that he may know when to remove the Senſation by ceaſing to act upon my Soul. All this that Being

who causes our Sensations must be supposed to know, and that too exactly and critically, and that too not only here or there, in this or that particular Place, but all the World over, among that vast Number of Rational Creatures, that are in it, and who all partake of the same Sensations by the like Impressions. But now what Being can we suppose capable of such a Province as this, but a Being of infinite Understanding and Power, one that need not go abroad for his Intelligence, but sees all things immediately in himself, and produces all things by the immediate Efficacy of his Will?

We may therefore and must conclude, that 'tis *God* and God only that acts in us, and is the true and proper Cause of all our Sensations, of that Pleasure and that Pain which we feel by the Mediation of the Corporeal and Sensible World. That in the various Rencounter of Bodies knocking and justling one against another the only Part of us that is acted upon, is our *Body*; and though our Spirit suffer by that Occasion, yet that 'tis God only

only that truly acts upon it, and makes it feel whatever it feels. That the moſt that Bodies can pretend to is only to be the *Cauſes* of the *Impreſſion* that is made upon our Bodies, and *Occaſions* of thoſe *Sentiments* that ſpring up in our Souls. In fine, that Bodies neither have any thing in them reſembling our Senſations, nor any Power to produce them in us, but that 'tis God that produces them by Bodies, who acts continually both in and by his Works. So then 'tis not the Sun that enlightens us, but God by the Sun. 'Tis not the Fire that gives us Heat, but God by the Fire. 'Tis not the moſt delicate Fruit, or the richeſt Perfume, that delights either our Taſt or our Smell, but 'tis God alone that raiſes Pleaſure in us by the Occaſion of theſe Bodies. The whole matter of the Creation though in continual Motion, is yet as to us, that is, to our Spirits, an idle, dead, unactive thing, and that of it ſelf ſignifies no more to the Production of our ſeveral Senſations, than a company of odd Figures or ſenſleſs Characters do to the Cure of an *Ague*. The Sun enlightens us, and Fire warms

us, just as those Figure *cure* us, and no otherwise. They are Positive Conditions, and that's all; but tis God alone that is the true Efficient Cause.

This perhaps will be call'd *Persuading Men out of their Senses.* It may be so, but what then? Men must oftentimes be persuaded out of their *Senses* before they can be persuaded into *Sense.* The Prejudice of the Senses is of all others the most obstinate and cleaving, 'tis what we first take up, and last put off. And I am very apprehensive how strong this great Prejudice lies against the whole Argument of this Discourse; but the Comfort is that it lies as strong against *Truth* too, which we seldom discover when we listen to the Suggestions of our Senses, and as seldom miss of when we do not. I shall not therefore think it an *Objection* though never so many sensible Prejudices were muster'd up against the present Theory, so long as I have clear and evident *Reason* to conclude for the Truth of it, which is the only Oracle we are to consult, and whose Answers we are to regard.

Well

Well then, we have now at length found out the true Cauſe of all our *Pleaſure*, and in that the only proper Object of our *Love*. And certainly if ever Philoſophy were a Hand-Maid to Divinity, it is now, as furniſhing us with a certain Ground for the moſt ſublime and noble Concluſion in the World, the full, perfect and intire Love of God, which now appears to be founded upon Principles, and to be demonſtrable in a clear and diſtinct Order of Reaſoning. For if God be the only true Cauſe that acts upon our Spirits, and produces our Pleaſure, then he only does us good, he only perfects our Being and makes us happy; and if he only does us good, then he only is our good; and if he only is our good, then he only is lovely, or the proper Object of our Love; and if he only is lovely, then 'tis plain that we ought to love none but him, and him intirely. Or to argue backwards, we are to love nothing but what is lovely; nothing is lovely but what is our Good; nothing is our Good, but what does us good; nothing does us good but what cauſes Pleaſure in us; nothing cauſes

Pleaſure

Pleasure in us but God; therefore we are to love nothing but God. I say nothing but God, for he is the only lovely Object, and he is infinitely so. Nothing but God, for he only is our Good. Nothing but God, for he only does us good and makes us happy. Nothing but God, for he only is the Author of all our Pleasure; and in him we not only live, move and have our Being, but have also all the Joy and Comfort of our Being. Whatever Degree of Good we have receiv'd we have receiv'd it of him; whatever we enjoy, we enjoy it in him; and whatever we expect, we expect it
Psal 36. 9. from him, with whom is the *Well of Life*, and in whose Light we hope to see Light; and therefore we are to love none but him, and him with the whole Heart, Soul and Mind, with the full weight of our Desire, with all the Activity of our Love.

As we cannot love *beyond* God, so we ought not to love *short* of him. We ought not to love any *Creature*, as having not one Degree of Love but what is due to the Creator. Neither *Body* nor *Spirit* ought to be his *Rivals* in

in our Love, and then are they to be reckon'd as such, not only when we love them *above* God, but even when we love them *with* him. For indeed we ought not to love them at all, they are not at all Lovely, and have therefore no right nor title to the least degree of our Love. No, it is all Gods *Peculiar*, and whatever share of it we bestow upon them, it is so much Fire stoll'n from God's Altar, and our Love is *Sacrilegious*.

Indeed were Creatures at all Lovely, were they in any sense our Good, were they able to do us any, were they the Causes of our Happiness in any Measure, could they give us so much as one grateful Sensation, though it were but that little contemptible Pleasure of a sweet Smell, there would be then some portion of our Love due to them. But since there is nothing of all this in them, since they Communicate to me no Good, nor are any more able to please a Faculty than to Create it, what pretence have they to the least interest in my Love? 'Tis plain, that they have none; and as plain, that I ought not to bestow any part

part of my Love upon them, but to reſerve it all for my God, who has all thoſe Qualifications for it which they want, and whom therefore I cannot love as I ought, unleſs I thus love him with my whole Heart, Soul and Mind.

Were God only our *Summum Bonum*; Were he only our *Chief*, and not our *Only* Good (as 'tis commonly repreſented) he could then juſtly pretend to no more than our Chief Love; and we ſhould ſufficiently diſcharge our Devoirs to him by loving him *beſt* and *moſt*, by aſſigning him the principal Room in our Hearts. But he need not be the only Gueſt there; we might innocently entertain Creatures along with him, being upon this ſuppoſition only obliged to allow him the *Precedency*. But alas this is not enough, this will not ſerve in caſe God be our *Only Good*, as we have clearly proved that he is; and as we are plainly told that he is, in our Saviours Anſwer to him that call'd him
Mar. 10. 18 Good Maſter, *Why calleſt thou me good, there is none good but one, that is God.* Interpreters have been ſtrangely put to't

to't to accommodate this Text with a convenient Gloſs, to define in what ſenſe this is to be taken, *That there is none good but God.* One will have it, *None* Originally *good but God.* Another, *None* Supremely *good but God.* And a Third, *None* Perfectly *good but God.* And a Fourth, *None* Infinitely *good but God.* But 'tis plain, that theſe all ſhoot below the Mark. The Text ſays a great deal more than any, or all of this amounts to; it ſays abſolutely and indefinitely, without any Limitation, *That there is none good but God:* Or, *That God is the* Only good. And this agrees exactly with the Hypotheſis now laid down and proved, which will not only *bear*, but *require* this literal ſenſe of the Words. For by this it appears, that in the ſtricteſt ſenſe, *There is none good but God*, becauſe there is none but he that acts in us, and is the true Cauſe of all the Pleaſure which we do, or can ever enjoy. It all flows, not only from his *Bounty*, but from his very *Operation*; and is not only his *Gift*, but his *Production*: Which certainly is ground enough to aſcribe to him the Title of *the only Good.* Other things indeed

may

may be said to be good in *themselves* after a Metaphysical way of speaking, in the same sense as God is said to have pronounc'd all things good that he had made, that is, *Metaphysically*, as having all that was requisite to the Integrity and Perfection of their Natural Beings, according to such a Rank or Order in the Creation. In this sense indeed the Creatures are good; for God can make nothing but what is so: But they are not *our* good, they are not good to us, because they do us none, as not being able to affect us with so much as one pleasing Sentiment, to add so much as one real degree of Happiness to our Being. No, God is the true Author and Cause of it all; 'tis he that *puts gladness into our Hearts*, and diffuses his Divine Sweetness throughout our Souls; and therefore he only is our Good, and he only ought to be the Object of all our Love. As for Creatures, they are no more our *Goods* than they are our *Gods*; and we may as well *Worship* them as *Love* them.

Psal. 4. 7.

We are then to withdraw our Love from the whole Creation (which we may

may do without any injuſtice) and fix it all upon the great Author of it. That Love of ours which runs out into ſo many little Streams, and is diſpers'd among ſo many Objects in the Viſible World we are to collect together, and caſt into one great Channel, and let it all flow in one full Tide towards God. We are to trace out with diligence all the private ways of this wandring Paſſion, fetch in every ſtragling Affection, and not ſuffer the leaſt weight of our Love to reſt upon a Creature. No, we are to ſummon every Creature to come in and give up that Portion of our Love which it has ſo long uſurp'd, but could never deſerve; and when once our Heart is free of them, we are wholly to devote it to God, whom we are to make the Sole Proprietor of our Love, which we are no longer to look upon as *Common*, but as Sacred Fire, which muſt be wholly appropriated to the *Altar*.

And that we ought to be thus rooted and grounded in Divine Love; and that there is ſuch a Breadth, Length, Depth and Height in it, that we have not either laid our Foundation too deep

deep, or raiſed our Structure too high, will appear by many places of Scripture (beſides that in the Text) injoyning our Love to God according to the ſame amplitude and unmeaſurable Meaſure. Such are all thoſe Divine Teſtimonies as import a not loving or hating of God, when any portion of our Love is beſtow'd upon the Creature. To which purpoſe is that Speech of our Saviour, who was the beſt Teacher, and the beſt Patern of Di-

Mat. 6.24. vine Love, *No man can ſerve two maſters, for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or elſe he will hold to the one and deſpiſe the other. Ye cannot ſerve God and Mammon.* Here we are plainly told, that we cannot divide between God and the Creature; but that the adhering to the one is the rejecting of the other. And the reaſon is, not only becauſe our Natural Faculties and Capacities are too Narrow and Scanty to be employ'd upon two ſuch vaſtly different Objects; but alſo becauſe we cannot love either of them but upon ſuch a *Principle* as muſt utterly exclude the love of the other. For we muſt not love any thing but what is our true Good, what can both deſerve

deserve and reward our Love. And there can be but one thing that is so. It must be either God or the Creature. If then the Creature be our Good, let us love that and that only, that and not God; but if God be our true Good (as most certainly he is) then let us love God and God only, God and not the Creature. For tis a most inconsistent and impracticable thing to talk of carving out our Love between both, *Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.*

To the same purpose, but somewhat more expressly, is that Admonition of St. *John*, *Love not the World, neither the things that are in the World. If any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him.* Here you have again all Love of the Creature expressly forbidden, as altogether inconsistent with the Love of God. What can be more full and plain, Love not the World, nor the things of the World? I know that according to the Common Gloss this is meant of the *immoderate* Love of the World, as if St *John* had said, Love not the World *immoderately* or to ex- 1 John 2. 15.

ceſs. But this is only for want of Principles upon which to raiſe an higher Senſe. 'Tis plain that the Words import a great deal more, namely, that we are not to love the World at all, that all Love of it is immoderate. And by the former Meaſures it appears, how and why it is ſo.

Hence it is that St. *James* calls ſuch as love the World, and yet at the ſame time, pretend to be Lovers of God, *Adulterers* and *Adultereſſes*. For after he had ſpoken of Concupiſcence (which is nothing elſe but the Love of the Creature) as the Seed and Principle of all Wars and Contentions, he thus beſpeaks them that were held and poſſeſs'd by it, *Ye Adulterers and Adultereſſes, know ye not that the Friendſhip of the World is Enmity with God? Whoſoever therefore will be a Friend of the World is the Enemy of God.* It ſeems that in St. *James*'s Account our Heart is ſo much God's Property and Peculiar, and ought ſo intirely to be devoted to him that 'tis a kind of Spiritual Fornication and Adultery to admit any Creature into a Partnerſhip with him

Jam. 4. 4.

in

in our Love. I know but of one sort of Spiritual Sin besides that is call'd *Adultery* in Scripture, and that is the Sin of *Idolatry*, which goes frequently by the Name of going a *Whoring* after other Gods. And so in like manner the Love of the Creature is here said to be *Adultery*, which implies that they are in great measure the same, as having one common Name, and that every Lover of the Creature is in his proportion an Idolater. And so upon our former Principle he is. For by loving Creatures we suppose them our Goods, that they are able to act upon our Souls and affect them with pleasing Sensations, that they perfect our Being and are the Causes of our Happiness, which is to suppose them to be as so many Gods. So that there can be no such thing as loving the World with *Moderation*, since we ought not to love it at all. For we *deifie* the Object that we love, and to affect the Creature in any degree is so far to *idolize* it.

To the like purpose we cannot but apply that remarkable Passage of St. Paul, *The World is crucified unto me,* Gal. 6. 14.

*and I unto the World*, which at once comprizes our present Conclusion (that the Creature is not to be the Object of our Love) with the very same Ground and Bottom upon which we have built it. The Apostle here first of all supposes the World to be crucified, that is, to be a dead, unactive, silent and quiescent thing in respect of himself, as not being able to operate upon him, or affect his Soul with any Sentiment as a true, proper Efficient Cause, and then in Consequence of that declares himself to be also crucified to the World, not only indifferently or moderately affected towards it, but perfectly dead and cold to all its Imbraces, and altogether insensible and unmoved at all its Charms. For to what purpose should a Man hug and imbrace a Carcase, or be *alive* to that which is *dead* to him? Let me imbrace the World never so long I shall never be able to impart a vital Heat to it, to quicken it into Life and Motion; but that perhaps may communicate some of its Coldness to me, chill and benum my Faculties. It may if I throw my Arms about it and imbrace it; but I will not,

not, I will be as dead to that as that is to me, keep at a diſtance from it, and not glance one languiſhing Look towards it, but rather treat it as a dead Carcaſe; bury it out of my ſight, and leave it to putrifie in Silence and Forgetfulneſs.

And thus have I repreſented the full and true Latitude and Extent of *Divine Love*, and in that the full and true Import of this firſt and great Commandment of loving the Lord our God with our whole Heart, Soul and Mind, which now appears to be a great Commandment indeed, but worthy of him that gave it, and both worthy of that ſolemn Mark of Attention wherewith it was delivered, *Hear, O Iſrael.* And let all the whole Creation hear and with Silence attend to the Words of this great Law, which leſt any ſhould fancy himſelf exempt or unconcern'd, ſeems to be expreſly directed to every particular Creature by Name, as it were, in the ſecond Perſon. *Thou* ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, all thy Soul, and all thy Mind. *My Son, give me thy Heart*, we may now ſuppoſe to Deut. 6. 4.

be the Language of the Great God to every Rational Creature. Give me thy Heart, for 'twas I that made it, 'twas I that gave it thee, 'twas I that kindled in it a vital Flame, 'twas I that gave it its Pulse and its Motion, and that for no other end but to direct and incline it towards me, the only proper Object of its tendency. For 'tis I also that am thy true Good, all thy Springs are in me, 'tis I that refresh thy dry and thirsty Soul with the Streams of *Eden*, 'tis I that raise in thee all thy grateful Sensations, and am the true Cause of all thy Pleasure and Delight. Therefore, my Son, give *me* thy Heart. I only merit, and 'tis I alone that can reward thy Love; Let none therefore have any Share in it but me, and let me have it all. This is the Measure of Divine Love, and this is the Scope and Intendment of this great Law, and these are the Natural and Moral Reasons upon which it is founded. By which you may see what noble Divinity may be dug up out of the Mines of Philosophy, and how necessary it is to have a right System of Nature in order to the thorough Comprehension of *Christian Morality*,

*Morality*, which has its Bottom and Foundation in the Nature of things, and is accordingly as capable of Demonſtration as any Theorem in that Science, whoſe Character is *Evidence* and *Certainty*.

If it ſhould now be objected (as 'tis very probable it may) that the enlarging this Firſt Commandment to ſuch a Magnitude, will make it devour and ſwallow up the Second. For if the Love of God muſt be thus perfect and entire, ſo as to be excluſive of all Creatures, what room can then be left for the Love of our *Neighbour*? To this the Anſwer is very eaſie and very clear. If our Love to God and our Neighbour were of the ſame kind, the entire Love of the former would indeed wholly exclude that of the later. But this is not the Caſe. We are not here ſuppoſed to love God in the ſame ſenſe, or with the ſame ſort of Love wherewith we love our Neighbour. We do not love God by wiſhing any Good to him (whereof he is not capable) but by wiſhing him as a Good to our ſelves. On the contrary, we do not, or at leaſt ſhould not love

our Neighbour by wishing him as a Good to our selves, (for he is not our Good) but by wishing Good to him. That is in short, we love God with Love of *Desire*, and we love our Neighbour with Love of *Benevolence* or Charity. But now the entire Desire of God is very consistent with all manner of Benevolence to our Neighbour. It does indeed wholly exclude all love of Desire towards him. But this is what I contend for, I would have the Love of God so vehement and so ardent, as to burn up, devour, yea, utterly annihilate all *Desire* of the Creature.

Must I not then you'll say, at all love Creatures? What may I not love this or that delicate Fruit, or this or that rich Wine? May not I love what delights my Palate, and yields me pleasure? Yes, if Bodies were the true Causes of your pleasure, you might, nay you ought to love them, as being upon that supposition your proper Good. But this is the very thing they are defective in; we have clear and inconteſtable Reason to assure us, that they are not the true real Causes of any

any of our Senſations. But however, there is Pleaſure, you'll ſay, *annex'd* to them; for we feel Pleaſure in the *Uſe* of ſuch and ſuch ſenſible things. True, we do ſo, but the moſt that ought to be concluded from hence is, that we may *ſeek* and *uſe* theſe ſenſible things, to which by the Order and Inſtitution of Nature, Pleaſure is annex'd: As on the contrary, that we are to ſhun and avoid thoſe ſenſible things to which is annex'd the oppoſite Sentiment of Pain. But it will not hence follow, that either the former is to be loved, or the later to be fear'd. 'Tis true indeed, that Pleaſure it ſelf is always lovely, and ſo is the true Cauſe of it. We muſt love whatever is able to cauſe Pleaſure in us, and in whoſe power it is to make us Happy. But then we muſt take heed leſt we miſtake that for the true *Efficient Cauſe* which is only the *Occaſion*; leſt we attribute our Senſations to Bodies as their proper Effect, to the production of which they ſerve only as Poſitive *Conditions*, determining the Operation of God, the only true Efficient Cauſe. So much indeed muſt be allow'd them, but our Rea-

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ſon will not ſuffer us to allow them any more; and though in regard that they do ſo much they may be innocently *ſought* for and *uſed*, yet becauſe they do no more, they muſt not be *loved*. As we *muſt* love the Efficient Cauſe of our Pleaſure, ſo we *may* ſeek after, and make uſe of that which is the Occaſion of it; but this is all, we muſt not advance one ſtep higher, for we have no Warrant beyond this. So that though I may eat of a pleaſant Fruit, and enjoy Pleaſure in the uſe of it, yet I muſt not make it the object of my Love; I muſt not place any degree of Affection upon it. I am to remember, that though in the Eating of this Fruit I find my ſelf delighted, yet this Pleaſure is neither in the Fruit it ſelf, nor from it, but that 'tis God that raiſes this grateful Sentiment in my Soul, and accordingly I am thankfully and devoutly to acknowledge and reverence his Divine Operation, and to *Love him* all the while I *uſe* and *enjoy* the *other*. The ſhort then of this matter reſolves into this, we may ſeek and uſe ſenſible things *for* our Good, but we muſt not Love them *as* our Good.

But

But may we not love the Creatures with a *Relative* Love? So indeed it is ſaid by ſome, who think they ſtrain the Love of God to a very high Pitch, when they tell us, that we muſt love nothing but God, or in Order and Relation to God. So then, according to theſe Men, we are allow'd to love Creatures, provided it be in a way of Relation and Subordination to God, who upon this Principle is not to be the *Only*, but only the *Final* and *Ultimate* Object of our Love. But methinks theſe Men's Relative Love is very much like the Relative Worſhip of the Papiſts. They make God the only *ultimate* Object of all Divine Worſhip; and ſo do theſe Men make him the only *laſt* Object of Love: But yet they allow of giving Divine Worſhip to a Creature, provided it be in a *tranſitive* and *relative* way; that is, provided it only paſs through the Creature, and terminate upon God. And ſo theſe Men allow of beſtowing our Love upon a Creature, provided it be for God's ſake, or in *relation* to God, provided it do not ſtop and reſt at the Creature, but run on, till at laſt it fix upon God as its final

final Object. The Notions are exactly Parallel to each other, and they both shew how extreamly loath Men are to take a final leave of the Creature, to disengage intirely from sensible things. They cannot be perfectly wean'd from what they so dearly affect, and therefore would fain contrive the matter so, as in the midst of all their Love and Devotion to God, to have still some Reserve for the Creature; to maintain some little under-Current of Religion and Affection for sensible things, which they would still have leave to Worship and Love, though it be never so remotely and indirectly, though it be but in a *Relative* way. This I take to be the true Ground and Bottom of both these Notions, the Common Disease of our Nature, the great Propensity of the Soul to sensible things, which makes Men still willing to allow them a share both in their Religion and in their Affection; and that they might do it with the better Colour, has put them upon finding out this Notable Distinction of a *Relative Worship*, and of a *Relative Love*. And truly I think one is as good as the other; that we may

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as well Worſhip the Creature with a Relative Worſhip, as well as Love the Creature with a Relative Love. For 'tis plain that this later Diſtinction does as much ſuppoſe that God only is the *proper* Object of *Love*, as the other does ſuppoſe that he is the only *proper* object of *Worſhip*, otherwiſe what need this Qualification of our Love to the Creature that it be *Relative*? Well, but if ſo, then as to worſhip the Creature though but *Relatively*, is to give that Worſhip to the Creature which is proper to God; ſo to love the Creature though but *Relatively*, is in like manner to give that Love to the Creature which is proper to God. And if this be thought a ſufficient Reaſon to diſallow of a *Relative Worſhip*, I cannot ſee why we ſhould not for the very ſame Reaſon give Sentence againſt this *Relative Love*, or why one ſhould not be reckon'd Idolatry as well as the other. But to bring this Matter to a compendious Iſſue, the ſhort is this; either Creatures are truly and really lovely, as being our true and proper Good, or they are not. If they are, then a Relative Love is too *little*, we ought to love

love them with more than a Relative Love, we ought to love them Absolutely and for themselves. But if they are not (as by a Light as clear as Day it appears they are not) then even a Relative Love is too *much*. For what is not truly lovely, is always loved too much if it be loved at all. So that either way there is no Pretence for admitting this last expedient of our Concupiscence, the Relative Love of the Creature. And thus all the Doors and Avenues of the Heart of Man are shut fast and bolted against the Creatures, who are now all banish'd from this Seat of Love, and God only left in Possession there.

Thus it is in *Theory*, but oh when will it be thus in *Practice*? When will degenerate Mankind rise up to this noble Pitch of Divine Love? When shall we thus love the Lord our God with our whole Heart, Soul and Mind? When shall we be thus loose and free from the Creatures? When shall we learn to lift up our Hearts above this sensible World? When shall we exalt our Souls above the Love of Bodies? When shall we leave off to idolize

idolize Matter? *O wretched Men that we are, who ſhall deliver us from the Body of this Death!* Rom. 7. 24. The Soul by her Body has contracted ſuch an Alliance with the Material World, that we have a ſort of Magnetick Inclination towards ſenſible things which in ſome Men is exalted to that degree, that inſtead of loving *God* with all their Hearts, Souls and Minds, they love the *World* at that rate, making that their God, their End, their Supream Good. Wonderful Stupidity, as well as Impiety, to love that beyond and more than God, which we are not ſo much as to love at all! What a Reverſe is this of this great Law, to love the World as we are commanded to love God, with our whole Heart, Soul and Mind! Who would ever think it poſſible that the Great God ſhould be thus out-rivall'd by his Creatures? But the miſery of it is, as we *live* by Senſe, ſo we *love* alſo by Senſe. We dwell in Matter, and we are inviron'd all round with Matter, ſo that we cannot get through the Croud and Throng of Creatures to come at our God. The Creatures do ſo preſs upon us, and ſo continually

ally court our Love by addreſſing themſelves to all our Senſes, that we cannot deny their importunity. They alſo have the advantage of being the only Objects of our Sight, for none ſhall ſee me and live, ſaith God. Let us enlarge our Proſpect never ſo far and wide, we ſee nothing but Creatures. In them our Proſpect begins, and in them it terminates. They alſo have the Priviledge to ſtand before us and look us, as it were, in the Face whenever we feel Pleaſure or Pain; and 'tis at their Impreſſion that we ordinarily have theſe Sentiments, which impoſes upon our Imaginations, making us apt to look upon them as the Cauſes of our Good and of our Evil, and accordingly as the proper Objects of our love, and of our Fear; and all becauſe we have our Senſations at their Preſence and upon their Impreſſion, while in the mean while God, who is the true Cauſe, appears not in view, but hides himſelf from us, and acts *his* part behind a Cloud. But were our Eyes once open'd, could we but ſee how abſolutely and intirely we depend upon God both for our Being and for the whole Perfection of

of it, for all that we are, have or enjoy; how he alone acts in us, and cauſes our Senſations; how he inlightens our Underſtandings with his Light, warms our Wills with his Love, and refreſhes our Souls with his *Pleaſure*, while in the mean time all the Creatures ſtand mute and ſilent before him, and like ſo many *Cyphers* in his Preſence, having not the leaſt Activity or Operation upon our Spirits; I ſay, could we have ſuch a Scene as this before us, we ſhould quickly diſmiſs the whole Creation from our Hearts, and be wholly poſſeſs'd and ſwallow'd up with the Love of God. We ſhould then love God as God loves himſelf, not with the ſame *Infinity*, but with the ſame *Intireneſs* of Love. For as God loves none but himſelf, ſo ſhould we then love nothing but God.

In the mean while I make no queſtion but that it is *now* thus in *Heaven*. The Saints and Angels there with their Beatifick Viſion of God, have alſo a clear Sight of their abſolute and intire dependence upon him. They ſee the true Origin of all Good, and

can trace Happineſs to its Head. They ſee where and whence its Springs do riſe, that they all iſſue forth from the Foot of the Throne, where is the *Well* of *Life* ſpoken of both by the *Pſalmiſt* and by St. *John*, whence all the Streams of Pleaſure take their ſeveral Channels to water and refreſh the myſtical *Eden*, the Intellectual Garden of God. All this which we are now fain to argue out by a train of Conſequences, is plainly laid open to the clear view of the bleſſed Inhabitants of that Place, which muſt neceſſarily repreſent God to them as the only lovely Object, and by conſequence take off every degree of their Love from the Creature, and collect together, and ſettle the whole Force and Weight of it upon God, that ſo *he may be All in All.* This is the Meaſure of Divine Love in Heaven, and this ought to be the Meaſure of it upon Earth.

Pſal. 36.
Rev. 22. 1.

With Angels therefore and Arch-Angels and with all the Company of Heaven let us unclaſp our Arms from the Imbraces of the Creation and adore and love the Lord our God with our

our whole Heart, Soul and Mind. Let not God any longer divide with the Creature (which is not a fit Companion for ſo Divine a Gueſt) but let him reign an abſolute Monarch in our Hearts and ingroſs our whole Love, eſpecially ſince that whole is ſo little. Love is the great *Bias* which God has put into our Natures to carry us towards himſelf. And thither let it carry us, and there let it fix and lodge our Souls, which are then in their greateſt Perfection when in the full and intire *Love* and *Enjoyment* of God. To whom be all Glory and all Love. *Amen.*

# A DISCOURSE CONCERNING *The Natural, and the Moral Vanity of Man.*

Pſal. 39. 6.

*Surely every man walketh in a vain ſhew, ſurely they are diſquieted in vain.*

Or as in the other Tranſlation,

*Man walketh in a vain ſhadow, and diſquieteth himſelf in vain.*

EVen *Man*, who was made and intended by God for the greateſt and moſt excellent End, and was accordingly

cordingly furniſh'd with all proper Means for the attainment of this End, having an excellent Nature given him, duly temper'd and pois'd between dry Intelligence and blind Appetite, being altogether neither One nor the Other, but inrich'd with Vigour of Inclination, and a Bright Underſtanding to govern it, with the Light of Reaſon, and with the Flame of Paſſion, having at once the advantage both of Sail and Compaſs, and ſo capable both of knowing, chuſing, and enjoying his Supreme and Only Good.

Even *Man*, who is the very Draught and Tranſcript of his Creator, and the Maſter-piece of all his Lower Creation: Who has Dominion given him over all the Vegetable and Senſitive World; upon whom both Sun and Moon wait, and the Stars in their Courſes pay Attendance, to whom the very Angels are Guardians, and for whoſe ſake the Heavenly Bodies both *Move* and *Shine*. Who upon his entrance into Being, put his Maker to the Stand, gave infinite Wiſdom a Pauſe, and raiſed a Solemn Conſultation in Heaven, as being at once the

Concluſion and the Compendium of the ſix days Work.

Even Man, who *applies his heart to know, and to ſearch, and to ſeek out Wiſdom, and the Reaſon of things*, that Grafts the Accompliſhments of Art upon the Stock of Nature, and by the improvement of Study and Education ſtands upon higher ground, and diſtinguiſhes himſelf as much from the Common Pitch of Men, as they are diſtinguiſh'd from the Level of Beaſts. Man that is ſaluted with the Titles of *Learned* and *Wiſe*, that is ſuppoſed to underſtand all Myſteries, and all Knowledg, and (which is more) that does really underſtand his own Ignorance; that knows much, and that that much is little; and ſo is not lifted up with his Knowledg, nor has his Head turn'd with the Height upon which he ſtands. Man too that towres and plumes upon his Endowments, that views himſelf with the magnifying end of the *Proſpective*, and others with that which Contracts; that has ſome Wiſdom, and pretends to a great deal more; that ſits down and enjoys his paſt Attainments, thinking himſelf too

Wiſe

Wiſe (as others too Dull) for further Improvement: Man, let him be what he will for Eminence, either Really or in Opinion, either by Nature or by Art, as Great and Noble a Creature as he is, and as Great as he takes himſelf to be, notwithſtanding all his real and all his imaginary Grandeur, *He walketh in a vain ſhadow, and diſquieteth himſelf in vain.*

The Words are a very mean and degrading Character of a very high and Noble Creature, enough to mortifie and take him down in the midſt of all his Pride and Glory, as preſenting to his View (what he ſeldom has the Happineſs to ſee) a true Picture of himſelf, and that ſet in a true and proper Light, pointing out and deſcribing a twofold Vanity of Man, the Vanity of his State, and the Vanity of his Life; the one a Moral, and the other a Natural Vanity; which indeed is all the Vanity that a Creature is capable of.

For 'tis to be conſider'd, that the words are a particular inſtance and reaſon of a general Propoſition. The

Psalmist had said just before that *every Man living is altogether Vanity*, or, *Vanity all over*; and then immediately adds as a Reason of so severe a Reflection, *For man walketh in a vain shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain.* As if he had said, there are but two possible ways whereby Man may become Vain: Or, there is but a two-fold Vanity that Man, or any other Creature is capable of, Vanity of *State*, and Vanity of *Life*; that Vanity which relates to the Nature and Being, and that which relates to the Demeanour and Conduct of a Creature; and both these are found in Man. The Vanity of Nature, in that he walketh in a *Vain Shadow*, and the Vanity of Conduct, in that he also *disquiets himself in Vain*. And therefore Man is altogether Vanity.

*Altogether Vanity*, so we render it, more according to the Septuagint than the Hebrew. In the Hebrew it is *Universal Vanity*; as if all the Vanity and Misery that is scatter'd up and down among other Creatures, were collected together and summ'd up in Man; so that Man should be, as it were,

were, a little Abridgment or Compendium of Vanity. In the Septuagint it is τὰ σύμπαντα ματαιότης, *quoad Omnia Vanitas*, Vanity as to all things, as to every part, and in every reſpect, in what Poſture, or in what Light ſoever you place him, or in what Capacity or Relation ſoever you conſider him. And between theſe two Rendrings there is conſiderable difference, even as much as there is between ſaying, that Man is *All Vanity*, and that *All of Man* is Vanity; One making Vanity to poſſeſs the Whole of Man, and the other making Man to poſſeſs or ingroſs the Whole of Vanity; which indeed is the ſtronger and bolder expreſſion of the two.

But we need not be very ſolicitous about this; for take it in what ſenſe you will, either that Man is Univerſal Vanity, according to the *Hebrew*, or that he is Altogether Vanity, according to the *Septuagint*; they are both of them equally and ſufficiently deducible and juſtifiable from this very ſtrange, and very Melancholy Account the Pſalmiſt gives of Man, that he *walketh in a Vain Shadow, and diſquiets him-*

*himself in Vain.* Wherein you have all the Vanity that is or possibly can be, all that Man or any other Creature is capable of, Vanity of State or Being, and Vanity of Conduct, both Natural and Moral Vanity.

And first of all to begin with the Natural Vanity of Man, the Vanity of his State or Being, expres'd in the former part of the Text, *Man walketh in a Vain Shew or Shadow.* In an Image, (for so the Original בצלם signifies) not a solid substantial Image, but Airy, Flitting, and Phantastick Appearance, such as is in a Looking-Glass, or in a Dream, or in a Shadow. In such an Image does Man Walk, and is a kind of a *Spectrum* even while he lives. We read in the Scripture and elsewhere, of the *Shadow of Death*; and truly the Darkness and Obscurity of that State is ground enough for the Figure. But here we meet with another sort of Shadow, the Shadow of *Life*, and that a Vain Shadow too, a Shadow without a Substance, a Shew without any Reality, a meer Apparition. For such, and no better, is the whole State and Being of Man in this World. Indeed

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at the Opening of the next Scene, when the Veil of Mortality ſhall be laid aſide, and the Curtain that now parts between the Material and Intellectual World ſhall be drawn, 'tis to be hoped that a more Subſtantial View of things ſhall be laid out before him, but at preſent the beſt account we can give of him is, *that he Walks in a Vain Shadow.*

For the illuſtration of this, I might eaſily take the whole Frame of Man in pieces, and as a ſort of *Moral Anatomiſt*, read a Lecture of Vanity upon every Part, upon his Body, and upon his Soul, and upon the Powers and Faculties of each. I might tell you of the Weakneſs and Frailneſs of his Body, that as it carries within it ſelf the Cauſes of a neceſſary and ſpeedy Diſſolution: So it is alſo liable to a thouſand Accidents *without* that may haſten its ruin. A Structure of ſo difficult a raiſing, of ſo uncertain a ſtanding, and of ſo ſhort duration, that ſome have wonder'd, and made it an Objection againſt the Wiſdom of the great Artiſt, that he would beſtow ſo much Art upon ſuch Vile Materials, that he would be ſo elaborate upon a Trifle,

and

and spend such a deal of curiosity and exactness upon so transitory, so perishing a Work, the very delicacy and fineness of whose Composition subjects it to innumerable Disorders, whereof the Soul also has a share, and is a very sensible Partaker. A Work so form'd and laid out for Ruin, so naturally doom'd and order'd to Destruction, that though no other particular Evil should befall it, yet the whole Machine and Revolution of the Universe labours to destroy it, and the great and general Motion of Nature is continually carrying away some part of it, as the constant Course of a great and swift River, undermines the Foundations of a Building.

I might also represent to you the many Wants and Necessities of our Nature, and our great dependance upon other Inferiour Creatures, as well as upon those of the same Order with our selves. The great helplesness and infirmity of two parts of our little Time, *Infancy* and *Old Age*, and that great disorder of Sickness to which the whole is liable. That even our very Life and Health depend upon a Disease

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(for Hunger and Thirſt are no better) and the neceſſary Recruit of our Spirits upon the interruption of our Reaſon, and the waſte of our Time, almoſt half of which is conſumed in Sleep, that great *Tax* and *Cuſtom* of Nature upon the Life of Man.

The Vanity of whoſe preſent ſtate, I might further deſcribe from the Darkneſs of his Underſtanding, and the Narrowneſs of his Conception, which is able to apply it ſelf but to one Single Object at a time; and that too ſo imperfectly, that he is fain oftentimes to divide the moſt Simple Being into ſeveral partial, inadequate Idea's, (being not able to take it in all at once) to contract and leſſen the Object, that ſo he may adjuſt and proportion it to his own Narrowneſs. I might here alſo remark how few are the things that he knows even as to their meer *Exiſtence*, and how much fewer yet as to their *Nature*. That he knows but little of God, and little of his Works. That he is equally baffled and confounded by the Myſteries of Faith, and by the Appearances of Nature: Not to ſay any thing of the

the Mazes and Labyrinths of Providence. That he knows nothing of Spirits, and but little of Bodies, and leaſt of all of that Particular Body to which he is ſo wonderfully and ſo cloſely united, that he often takes it for *Himſelf*; which he animates and governs, and (ſuch is his misfortune) more often *ſerves*.

All this I might yet further illuſtrate from the great irregularity of the Will and Paſſions; which indeed is the weakeſt and blindeſt ſide of Man, the darkeſt part of this *Shadow*, and in which reſpect alone he may well be ſaid to *Walk in a Vain Shew*, and to be *altogether Vanity*. But I ſhall content my ſelf to have given a Confuſe Glance at theſe things, leaving the more particular improvement of theſe few general Hints to your own private thoughts, while in the mean time I deſcend to ſome more concerning and leſs obvious Conſiderations.

What we are now upon, is to give an Account of the Natural Vanity of Man, and how he *Walks in a Vain Shew*. I know I ſhould appear too Ab-

Abſtract and Metaphyſical, and withall, Paradoxical to moſt vulgar and unprepared Minds, ſhould I account for this by ſaying, That the whole Viſible and Senſible World is, as to us, a *Vain Shew*, a meer Cheat, a Deluſion, a Dream. Not I mean as to the *Exiſtence*, but as to the *Appearance* of Senſible Objects. That what we think we ſee, taſte, and ſmell in Bodies that are without us, is not really in the Bodies themſelves, but is all tranſacted within our own Minds. That the warmth of the Fire (to ſpeak popularly) and the Light of the Sun, the ſweet Odours of Flowers, and the delicious Reliſh of Fruits, the rich Enamel of the Field, and the Bluſhes of the Morning, with all the whole Varniſh and Imagry of Colours with which both the Senſe and Underſtanding of Man is ſo refreſh'd and entertain'd, and for the ſake of which we think the World ſo pleaſant a Region, are ſo Airy and Chearful in it, and ſo loath to leave it, that all theſe are not in the things themſelves, where we think we perceive them, but are only certain *Modifications* of our own Souls, certain Senſations raiſed in them by the

the Author of Nature at the Presence of outward Bodies, and upon the impression which they make upon our Organs of Sense. So that the whole World is like an *inchanted Island*, where we have fine Landskips and Pictures presented to our View; and that in so lively a manner, that we cannot forbear thinking that 'tis all a Reality without, when in the mean while, there is nothing of all this real but the *Sensation*, the whole being only an *Intellectual Scene*, transacted within our own selves. I say, should I make this to be the Condition of Man in this World, and that thus he *Walks in a Vain Shew*, among Cheats and Delusions, empty Representations and False Appearances, his whole Natural Life being no better than a pleasing Dream, I should offer nothing more than what is strictly and Philosophically true, and what I could easily Demonstrate upon the best Principles of Science that ever yet appear'd in the World. But this being too abstract and remote from Common Apprehension, I shall chuse rather to observe

I. *That*

I. *That Man walketh in a Vain Shew of Truth.* Not that I would be thought ſo much a *Sceptic* as to deny that there is any ſuch thing as *Truth*, or that we may have the *Knowledge* of it, or that we may alſo have a full and certain *Aſſurance* of that Knowledge. I readily grant, that there are not only things that *are* true, but that *muſt* be true, that there are neceſſary and eternal Truths; and he that denies that there is any ſuch thing as Truth, ſuppoſes at leaſt that Propoſition of his to be true, whereby he ſufficiently confutes himſelf. And I do as little queſtion the being of Knowledge and Certainty. I am well ſatisfied, that Reaſon aſſures us of the Exiſtence of ſome things, and Revelation of more, and that God has given to every Man Light and Knowledge enough to inſtruct him in his Duty, and to direct him in the Way that leads to Heaven, enough to anſwer all thoſe wiſe Ends for which God deſigned him, though perhaps not enough to compaſs ſome of thoſe falſe Ends of Vanity, Ambition and Curioſity which Man may propoſe to himſelf. And that every Man has or may have Underſtanding

enough to Live well, and be a good Christian, though every one cannot be a *Virtuoso*.

When therefore I say that Man walketh in a Vain Shew of *Truth*, my Meaning is, that of those many things which do seem to us here to be Truths, the far greatest part are far otherwise in their own Nature, and do appear otherwise to brighter Understandings that view them in a clearer and purer Light. Not but that Truth and right Reason is one and the same in both Worlds, but a great deal of that which we take for Truth, is otherwise conceiv'd by Beings of a superior Rank. I will not go so high for this as the supreme Being, concerning whom we are expressly told, Isa. 55. 8. that *his Thoughts are not like our Thoughts, nor his Ways like our Ways*: but if an Angel were to write a System of Philosophy or Divinity, there is reason to think that he would give an Account of things very different from what is vulgarly receiv'd, since even Men in their more mature and improved Age do often find reason to retract and unravel their greener Sentiments,

timents, and enter upon a new Set of Thoughts. An eminent Inſtance of which we have in St. *Auſtin*, who retracted a great part of his former Doctrins; and were his deceaſed Spirit now to have another Review of his Works, 'tis like he would retract even ſeveral of his Retractions.

But not to meddle any farther with the different Sentiments of *Superiour* Beings, we may be ſufficiently ſenſible what a Vain Shew of Truth we walk in, from that Difference of Apprehenſion that is among our Selves. That great Diverſity of Opinion, and Variety of Contradiction that is in the World, is a ſufficient Argument of this. For it being impoſſible that among contradictory Opinions any more than one of a ſide ſhould be in the right, 'tis certain that all the reſt can only have a *Vain Shew* of Truth. And if you would know how great the Extent of that is, do but conſider what Diverſity of Opinion there is among Men. This might be ſhewn throughout the whole Compaſs of Science; but I ſhall inſtance at preſent only in *Religion*, where Man has

the greateſt Concern to ſeek after the *Truth*, and with all the greateſt Light and Aſſiſtance to find and diſcover it, and yet 'twould even maze one to think how very different and oppoſite the Conceptions of Men are in this Matter, and what variety of Religions there are in the World, there being hardly two Men to be found even of thoſe that profeſs to be of the ſame Religion in general, nay and of the ſame Sect and Way in particular, that are all throughout of the ſame Judgment. Chriſtians differ not only from thoſe which are not Chriſtians, but from one another. Papiſts from Proteſtants, and each of theſe from one another. So that were one to give an Account of all the oppoſite Perſuaſions in Religion that are now going at once, one might ſooner make a *Voluminous* than a *Perfect* Hiſtory. But now Truth is One and Intire, and of all theſe ſeveral Religious Perſuaſions there can be but one of a ſide that is true; and therefore the Maintainers of all the reſt muſt walk in a Vain Shew, and embrace Error inſtead of Truth How far theſe Errors may prove damnable to them is another Queſtion; I only remark

remark at preſent how vaſtly numerous and extenſive the Errors and Miſtakes about Religion muſt needs be where the Diverſity and Contradiction is ſo great, and where the Truth is ſo ſingle. But I alſo obſerve

II. *That Man walketh in a Vain Shew of Happineſs.* And this is a much vainer Shew than the other: For there is ſome real Truth to be found (tho we muſt dig low for it) and of that which we embrace for ſuch all is not mere Shew and Shadow. But now 'tis moſt certain and demonſtrable both from Reaſon and from Experience, from the Nature of Things and from the Nature of Man, that there is no ſuch thing as true and real Happineſs to be found in this State. For *with thee is the Well of Life*, that Well whoſe living Water can be a conſtant Spring within our Souls, to quench and ſatisfie that great and general Thirſt of Human Nature, which will be allay'd only by him that made it, the *Fountain* of Being and Happineſs. With thee is the Well of Life, and with thee only; We have here only the Shadow of it, which can no more Pſal. 36. 9.

satisfie the Desire of our Spirit, than a painted River can quench our natural Thirst. He that drinks of this Water will thirst again, nay he will thirst even while he drinks it.

*Plato* calls Light the Shadow of God, and 'tis as true of all the other pleasing and refreshing Things of this World as well as of Light, that they are Shadows, and but Shadows of God the supreme and only substantial Good. And as a Shadow, though it may a little refresh and allay our *Heat*, will yet never be able to quench our *Thirst*, so the good Things of this World (those little Shadows of the true Good) though they may by the help of our Fancy afford us some Refreshment, can never yield us Satisfaction. *Cool* they may (as Shadows do) but cannot *Quench*.

And yet though 'tis thus certain that there is no such Thing as true and real Happiness to be had in this State, it must be confest that there is at the same time so flattering so bewitching an *Appearance* of it, that the wisest of Men after all their Reasonings,

ings, Reflections, and Experiences, are deluded by it. Though they have tried the Vanity, the Nullity of Fruition never ſo often, and have found it to be all over Cheat and Fallacy by a thouſand Experiments, yet forgetting the Treacheries of this grand Impoſtor (who like the Devil has been a Liar from the beginning) and how groſly they have been abuſed and diſappointed by him, they fall on to their Enjoyments again with as much Edge and Greedineſs, with as much Hope and Expectation, as if they had never known what Diſappointment meant; and though they can never ſay they *have* been, or *are*, yet they cannot forbear imagining that they *ſhall* be Happy. Strange kind of Inchantment, that Men ſhould be thus condemn'd to hunt after Shadows, and embrace Dreams, to ſeek continually after Happineſs where it is not to be found, and where they know it is not to be found, by all the Reaſon and Proportion of Things, by the expreſs Declarations of God in Scripture, and by all the Experience of Mankind. But this is part of that *Vain Shew* wherein Man walks. Wherein I ſay

he *Walks*, but wherein he can never ſit down and reſt, every Step he makes preſenting him with ſome new Appearance of Happineſs, and drilling him on further, ſo that he ſtill walks on, till he comes to the End of his Walk, and then turns round upon the ſame Enjoyments again; ſo that he can never get out of the *Inchanted Circle.*

This is the *Natural Vanity* of Man, and thus far he is rather to be pitied than blamed, it being all founded upon the neceſſary Weakneſs and Infirmity of his Nature. But to bring him deſervedly under the ſevereſt Cenſure, and to compleat the Character of his Vanity, he not only walks in a Vain Shew, but is withal ſuch a Fool as to diſquiet himſelf in vain, which is his *Moral* Vanity, and the next thing to be conſider'd.

*He diſquieteth himſelf in vain.* Innumerable are the Inſtances wherein he does ſo; but I ſhall briefly glance at a few, which I ſhall bring within the compaſs of theſe two general Heads, *Impoſſibilities* and *Unneceſſaries.*

*ries.* The Impoſſibilities are of two ſorts, Impoſſible Truths, and Impoſſible Goods. The Former impoſſible to be underſtood, the Latter impoſſible to be enjoy'd.

I. Man diſquiets himſelf in Vain about Impoſſible *Truths*, ſuch Truths as are not poſſible for him to Comprehend. So do all they firſt who imploy their Studies, and it may be write Voluminous Treatiſes about ſuch things whereof we have no manner of *Idea*, and of which Conſequently they can neither Affirm, nor Deny any thing to any purpoſe, or with any Satisfaction. As particularly about Spirits and Immaterial Subſtances, whereof we know not enough to be ever in a Capacity of Learning More, as having neither Idea, nor Principle to proceed upon, and which therefore a Man may Study a thouſand Years and be never the Wiſer. And yet how much Study and Thought has there been imploy'd, how much Time waſted, how much Sleep and Health loſt, how many Tedious Volumes Compoſed, and how many fine Heads turn'd and crack'd upon

upon this Desperate and unconquerable Theory!

So do they also Secondly, who trouble their Heads and rack their thoughts about such things which though they have some Idea of, yet it is so Obscure and Imperfect, that they can never hope to have a full and clear Comprehension of them, either as they are simply in themselves, or as they stand in relation with other things. Such are all the Inquiries and Disputes about Infinity and Eternity, about Space and Time, about the Divisibility of Quantity, about the Principle of Individuation, about Liberty and Necessity, and the reconciling of Prescience with Contingency, about the Ends of God, and the Reasons and Order of Providence, and the like. These are things of so abstruse a Nature, and whereof our Idea's are so very Confuse and Obscure, that we can never come to have any tolerable Comprehension of them, or Satisfaction about them, let us Study and Wrangle never so long. And yet Man is so Foolish and Vain as to disquiet himself (perhaps others too) in the

the ſearch of ſuch impoſſible Truths, not conſidering how much better it would become him, and how much more it would be for his eaſe to learn the true Bounds that divide Opinion from Knowledge, to ſtudy the Extent of his own Capacity (which one would think ſhould be quickly learnt) and to ſit down in a quiet Ignorance of thoſe things to which his Underſtanding is not proportioned, and to know the Length of his own *Line*, ſince he cannot all the Depths of the *Ocean* in which he Sails.

II. I ſhould now ſhew Secondly, how Man Diſquiets himſelf about impoſſible *Good*, as well as impoſſible Truth, but having given a pregnant Inſtance of this already, in the conſtant and eager Chaſe after Happineſs, wherein Men both tire and delude their Souls, notwithſtanding the many repeated Experiments and Convictions of the World's Vanity, I ſhall ſtay no longer upon this part, but go on to ſhew how they diſquiet themſelves about *Unneceſſaries*, which again are of two ſorts, unneceſſary Truth, and unneceſſary Good.

1. Man

1. Man Disquiets himself in Vain about *unnecessary Truth.* There is no other Truth necessary to be made the Object of Human Study, but only that which serves to the Moral Conduct of Man, to the Recollection of his Mind, to the Government of his Passions, and to the Direction of his Life and Manners in such a way as may lead him to Eternal Happiness, that which in one word the Apostle calls, *The Truth which is after Godliness.* This is the only Truth that Man is concerned either to seek after or to attain, either to know himself, or to promote in others. For though other Truths absolutely and in themselves considered, may be perfective of Human Understanding (which was made for the Contemplation of Truth) yet considering the present Station and Order of Man, he is concerned to trouble himself about no other than what serves to the Regulation of his Life and Manners, that being the only Business he has to do in this World. 'Tis certain both the *Wisdom* and the *Duty* of every Rational Creature, to employ his Study about those things only to which his Capacity is proportioned,

Tit. 1. 1.

tioned, and which are of preſent Concernment to him to be informed of thoſe things that are Poſſible and Neceſſary to be known. And I know but of one ſort of things that have both theſe Conditions, *viz.* things of a Moral or Divine Nature, that relate to Life and Manners: Which are the only proper Objects for the Study of Man, as his Circumſtances now ſtand, while he is acting his Probation for another World. He is not therefore now to ſtudy what will barely accompliſh his Mind, but what will lead him to his *End*, this being the true Meaſure to be obſerved by Man in his Search after Learning and Knowledge, as I have more largely ſhewn in a * particular Treatiſe upon this Occaſion. But now if this be a true Meaſure (as by all the Principles of Reaſon it muſt) I need not ſtand to reflect how ill the General way of Study will bear it, or how Vain the Thoughts and Meditations even of the moſt Awaken'd and thinking part of Mankind will be found to be, or about how many unneceſſary Truths they diſquiet themſelves. The Subject is indeed at once too plain, and too tender

* *Reflections upon the Conduct of Human Life.*

tender to bear any further Reflection. And therefore I shall hasten to consider,

2. How Man disquiets himself in Vain about unnecessary *Good*. I might here go a very short way to work, since our Saviour, who well understood both the Nature and the Necessities of Man, does expressly assure us that there is but *One thing Needful*, and we have as much reason to believe it as any part of the *Gospel*. And if there be but One thing Necessary, then how infinite are the *Unnecessaries* or rather Impertinencies that take up and torment the Thoughts of Men! But to take a little wider Compass, do they not trouble and disquiet their Minds about the Superfluities and Luxuriances of Life, fine Cloaths and rich Equipage, things that are so far from serving any Necessity, that they do not so much as add to the real and natural Convenience of Life, but rather to the Load and Burthen of it? Do they not disquiet themselves about Phantastick and Imaginary Goods; which many *Happy* Men never have, and some (the Wiser they) never desire,

ſire, I mean Greatneſs, Dignity and Honour, which add as much to a Man's Happineſs, or real Worth, as a high Shoe, or as a riſing Ground does to his Natural Stature, and no more. Are they not uneaſie and full of Concern about Fame and Glory, about their Titles and their Coats of Arms, about their Pedigree and about their Poſterity, about the Opinions and Cenſures of Men, what Eſtimation and reſpect they poſſeſs in their Minds, what they think, and what they ſay of them? Are they not Solicitous to procure a handſom Character in the World, and to be thought to deſerve it, to appear Witty and Ingenious, Men of Parts and Learning, of Conduct and Sagacity, and (perhaps) of Piety and Religion, and are they not inwardly troubled and diſcompoſed when they think they fail of any of theſe little Ends, or when they hear of any thing ſaid to their Diſreputation, or meet with any Diſreſpect? Do not Men diſquiet themſelves about having Heirs to a great Eſtate, Continuing their Name, and living (as they call it) in their Poſterity? Do they not trouble themſelves about

about Possibilities and Contingencies, about what Shall be, or what May be, so as not to be able either to enjoy the Present, or to be Thankful for what is past, merely for the anxious Concern they have about what is to Come? Nay, are there not many so beyond all Measure Sottish as to be possessed with a troublesom Care of what shall fall out after they are Dead and in the Grave, and to leave behind them a Stock of Praise and Commendation, which either they shall not then be in a Condition to *know*, or will certainly *Despise*? So Vain is the Shew that Man walks in, and so many are the ways whereby he acts the Tyrant and the Executioner upon his own Mind, and disquiets himself in Vain. A Character so very applicable to every Man, more or less, that Journies upon the Road of this World, that our Church in her Wisdom has thought fit to appoint this Psalm of which the Text is a part, to be used in her Funeral-Office at the Burying of the Dead; thereby implying, that there is no Man, though never so Great, Wise, or Good, but of whom it may justly be said at his last

laſt *Exit*, and upon whoſe Tomb it may be inſcribed as the concluding *Motto* of his Life, that he has walkt in a Vain Shew, and diſquieted himſelf in Vain. Some indeed do paſs away their time ſo quietly and inoffenſively, that they do not much diſturb the Peace of *others*; but there is no Man but who vainly diſquiets *himſelf*.

Poor unhappy Creature that he ſhould do ſo! Are there not neceſſary and unavoidable Cauſes of Trouble ſufficient, but he muſt needs add Voluntary Afflictions to his heap of Miſery, impoſe ſupernumerary Penances, diſquiet himſelf, and that too in Vain, without Reaſon, and without Meaſure, to no End or Purpoſe? 'Tis indeed a very deplorable Caſe; but the conſideration of all this will ſerve to teach us two very uſeful Leſſons, To be more Humble, and to be more Wiſe.

Firſt, *To be more Humble.* When Self begins to riſe up in thee, and thou findeſt thy Soul tempted to Pride and Arrogance upon the Conceit of either Natural or Acquired Excellencies, then

consider the Vain Shew, the Empty Apparition wherein Man walks, and the yet much Vainer Disquiet wherewith he voluntarily afflicts himself. Take a View of thy *Picture*, of thy Natural and of thy Moral Vanity, and return to a juster Estimation, to a more sober and modest Account of thy self. Consider how Vain thou art in thy Nature, and how much Vainer thou art in thy Conduct, and then see what Ground or Foundation thou hast for Pride; which would ill become thee as a *Creature*, but much worse as such an infirm and ill-govern'd, as such a *doubly Vain* Creature.

Secondly, *To be more Wise.* More Wise indeed, than to be thus needlessly troublesome to our selves; to walk about like restless and disturb'd *Ghosts*, and molest our own Ease and Quiet. For though we cannot help our Natural Vanity, that of Walking in a Vain Shew, yet we may in great measure help and prevent that which is Moral, our disquieting our selves in vain, and shall act very unaccountably to our selves, and be great enemies to our own Peace and Tranquility

lity if we do not. We ſhould think it a moſt intolerable Calamity, and that we had juſt Cauſe of Complaint, if we did ſuffer as much from others as we do from our ſelves, if they were as troubleſome to us as we are to our own Souls. A Houſe that is haunted and troubled with *Evil Spirits*, is look'd upon as a great Affliction, and ſo is a Mind that is tormented with perplex'd and uneaſie Thoughts. Theſe are great Judgments, and ſevere Trials, when they are brought upon us by a ſuperiour Hand: But are they the leſs ſo becauſe inflicted upon us by our ſelves? Or rather, does not this add to our *Miſery* the Aggravation of *Folly*?

*In our Patience* then let us *poſſeſs our Souls*, and be more Wiſe than to vex and torment them with vain and needleſs diſquiets, conſidering, that ſufficient to the ſhort day of Life is the *Neceſſary* Evil thereof. But if our Heads muſt work, and we will be ſolicitous, let it be where our great Concern lies, and about what deſerves our Care and Thoughtfulneſs, that is, ſo to order our Lives and

Converſations while we are here, that we may be for ever Happy hereafter. To Fear God and Keep his Commandments, for that is the whole and only *Duty*, and ought therefore to be the whole and only *Concern* of Man.

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# DISCOURSE

SHEWING

## *That the Law is not made void through Faith.*

Being a Visitation Sermon Preach'd in the Cathedral Church of *Sarum*, before the Right Reverend Father in God *Gilbert* Lord Bishop of *Sarum*, at his Visitation held there *September* 2. 1692.

Rom. 3. 31.

*Do we then make void the Law through Faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the Law.*

TO have a right general Notion of the *Gospel*, of those Terms and Conditions upon which God dispenses

ſpenſes Pardon and Salvation to the World in Jeſus Chriſt; to underſtand how far it agrees with the *Law*, and how far it differs from it; in what reſpect it is an Abatement, and in what reſpect it is an Improvement of it, is a thing ſo very neceſſary to all Chriſtians, eſpecially to all Teachers and Profeſſors of Chriſtianity (as that without which no one particular Head or Point of Chriſtian Divinity can either be rightly comprehended by themſelves, or open'd and explain'd to others) that I need not queſtion the ſeaſonableneſs of a Diſcourſe upon ſuch a Subject to ſuch an Auditory, and upon ſuch an Occaſion.

I muſt confeſs, I do not much admire to have things of a *Controverſial* Nature in Sermons, whoſe buſineſs ſeems rather to lie in perſwading and ſtirring up Men to the Practice of Piety and good Life, than in ſtating and deciding Queſtions. But whatever may be thought of the *particular* Controverſies in Religion, many of which were perhaps better let alone than even *rightly* determin'd, ſure the Notion of the Goſpel in General, though

a Notion, is yet ſo concerning and important a one (the whole Practice as well as Theory of Chriſtianity depending upon it) that I cannot but preſume that a clear and rational Account of this matter may be as acceptable and ſerviceable from the *Pulpit* as from a *Divinity-Chair*; eſpecially in an Age, when not only the particular Points of the Chriſtian Religion are corrupted, but the whole Deſign of it is miſtaken, and its general Idea altogether perverted and miſrepreſented, by a ſort of Men, who give ſuch an Account of Chriſtianity, as to overturn all *Morality*; and ſo explain the Goſpel, as wholly to evacuate the Law.

And ſince in behalf of this odd and abuſive Account of Chriſtianity, they alledge ſome ſingle Paſſages out of St. *Paul's Epiſtles*, abſtracted from the Scope and Occaſion of them, I have the rather thought fit to confront it with a paſſage from the ſame Divine Writer. A paſſage that ſeems directly level'd againſt the *Solifidian* Hypotheſis, and which one would think ſhould ſerve as a general *Key* to the Apoſtles meaning in all his Diſcourſes

about *Justification*, and wherein he seems to have laid in a Caution against all such gross misconstructions of it, as suppose him to dissolve the Force and Obligation of the Law by Preaching up the Faith of Christ. The very supposition of which extravagant Conceit, the Apostle here rejects with all the Indignation, and all the Abhorrence imaginable: *Do we then make void the Law through Faith?* says he, *God forbid*; *yea, we establish the Law.*

The words consist of a *Question*, and an *Answer*. The Question is, whether the Law be made void through Faith? That is, by the Gospel, or by that Account which the Apostle had given of the Gospel. To which the Answer is so far in the Negative, that 'tis said to be rather establish'd by it.

By *Law* here I suppose is meant truly and chiefly the *moral* Law. For *that* Law must be here asserted not to be made void, by which it was before asserted that Men are not Justified, this being the only pretence of suspicion that the Law is made void, because Men are supposed not to Justify'd by it. Do we

we then make void the Law, ſays the Apoſtle. *Then*, as much as to ſay in vertue of the Concluſion we have now laid down, that Men are not Juſtified by the Deeds of it. That Law therefore which is here ſaid not to be made void, muſt be one and the ſame with that whereby Men are ſaid not to be Juſtified. Thus much is clear. But now what Law is that? Is it not the Moral Law? Yes, it is. For the Apoſtle is here treating not of the Juſtification of the *Jews* only, but alſo of the *Gentiles*. He is treating of Juſtification in *General*, and ſetting down the ſtanding Terms upon which, not this or that Perſon or Nation, but Mankind in the *Lump* muſt expect to be juſtified. Now 'twould have been but a very empty Frigid Aſſertion to have ſaid, that Mankind in general (which will comprehend Gentile as well as Jew) is not juſtify'd by the *Ceremonial* Law. For what has the *Gentile* to do with the Law of Ceremonies? Or how could it be imagin'd that they ſhould expect Juſtification by a Law which was never given to them, and by which they never were obliged? That Law therefore by which

which all Men, the Gentile as well as the Jew, are here said not to be justified, must be some *Common* Law between them both, a Law of Universal Extent, and Unlimited Obligation. And what Law can this be but the *Moral* Law? what other Law is common to all Mankind? And that this is the Law here meant, is further plain from the Reason given why Men are not justified by it, namely, their present inability to keep it, which the Apostle concludes from the general Corruption and Immorality of Mankind. Ver. 9. *For we have before proved*, says he, *both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under Sin.* Upon which occasion he quotes and applies a passage out of the Psalms, describing the general Corruption of Mankind. *As it is written, There is none Righteous, no not one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable, there is none that doth good, no not one. Their Throat is an open Sepulchre, with their Tongues they have used Deceit, the Poison of Asps is under their Lips. Whose Mouth is full of Cursing and Bitterness: Their Feet*

*are*

*are ſwift to ſhed Blood. Deſtruction and Miſery are in their ways, and the way of Peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their Eyes.* Which are all of them inſtances of *Immoralities*, or Tranſgreſſions againſt the *Moral* Law. Again, ſays he, *that every Mouth may be ſtopp'd, and all the World may become guilty before God:* Which could not be in reſpect of the Ceremonial Law, becauſe that did not oblige all the World, but only a little part of it, and that too for a little time. *Therefore by the deeds of the Law*, ſays he again, *there ſhall no Fleſh be juſtified in his Sight, for by the Law is the knowledge of Sin.* Which muſt neceſſarily be meant of the Moral Law, becauſe of that impoſſibility of keeping it, which he had before ſpoken of, and illuſtrated by thoſe inſtances of general Immorality, and which he again inculcates, by ſaying, that *by the Law is the knowledge of Sin.* And ſo again, *All have ſinn'd and come ſhort of the Glory of God.* Which muſt needs be underſtood in reſpect of the *Moral* Law, there being no other Law by the tranſgreſ-

Ver. 19.

Ver. 20.

Ver. 23.

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sing of which all could sin and be guilty in the sight of God. From all which, it clearly appears, that the Law by which Men are here said not to be justified, is truly the *Moral* Law.

Those Learned Men who will have the Apostle, when he asserts that we are not justified by the Works of the Law, to be understood only of the *Ceremonial* Law, are led I presume into this Sense upon the Supposition, that not to be justified by the works of the *Moral* Law, would infer the nullity of that Law, and the non-necessity of those works, and so countenanc the absurd conceits of *Antinomianism* and *Solifidianism*. But there is no need for such a Jealousie or such a Scruple; for the reason given by the Apostle why Men are not justified by the Law being their inability to keep it, their being all *concluded under Sin*, 'tis plain that when he affirms that they are not justified by the Works of the Law, by *Works* he means *Perfect* Works, or exact unsinning Obedience. They are not justified by

by the Law, that is, by their keeping the Law, and that becauſe they do not, cannot keep it. Now not to be juſtified by the works of the Moral Law in this Senſe, (meaning by Works, *Perfect Works*,) does by no means infer the nullity of that Law, or the unneceſſity of thoſe Works, as *Conditions* to Juſtification, but only the impoſſibility of Perfect Obedience, or living abſolutely without Sin; I ſay, it does not infer a nullity of the Moral Law, as ſhall be made appear in the Proceſs: But it does infer an *Appearance*, a Seemingneſs of ſuch a thing, which is the ground upon which the Apoſtle raiſes this Objection here. Do we *then* make void the Law, namely, becauſe we ſay that Men are not juſtified by it? Does this infer its Nullity? So indeed it ſeems, but ſo it is not, as ſhall be ſhewn by and by. In the mean while, as we may ſafely as to the thing it ſelf, ſo with reſpect to the coherence of this Chapter, we muſt neceſſarily conclude, that the Law by which Men are here ſaid *not to be juſtified*, is truly the *Moral* Law, and conſequently, that

that

that alſo is the Law which is here ſaid *not to be made void.*

Not that I would wholly exclude the Ceremonial Law from the compaſs of the Text, which in ſome reſpect may alſo be ſaid not to be made void by Faith: But then we muſt change the ſenſe of the Word Καταργῦμεν here, which may ſignifie either to abrogate as to the *Authority* and *Obligation*, or to render idle and inſignificant as to the uſe and end of a Law. If by not making void here, you underſtand not abrogating as to the obliging part, then by Law here you muſt underſtand only the *Moral* Law, ſince the Ceremonial Law is on all hands acknowledged to be *thus* made void through Faith. But if by not making void, you will underſtand (as the Word Καταργῦμεν will alſo bear) not rendring idle and inſignificant as to the uſe and end, then by Law you may alſo underſtand the Ceremonial Law, for that is not ſo made void through Faith, as to be render'd an uſeleſs and inſignificant Inſtitution. Upon this acceptation of the Word Κα-

καταργοῦμεν, the Ceremonial Law may here alſo be taken in, tho if we regard the ſcope and coherence of the Apoſtle's Diſcourſe in this Chapter, I think 'tis very plain, that the Law which he here directly ſpeaks of, and which he ſays is not made void through Faith, is the *Moral* Law. So much for what is meant by *Law* here. And that by *Faith* here, is meant the Doctrin of Faith, or the Goſpel according as St. *Paul* had repreſented it, I think is very clear from the Context. The Words thus briefly ſtated, reſolve into theſe Two Propoſitions:

1. That the Goſpel does not make void the Law, meaning by Law (what I ſuppoſe the Apoſtle here principally does) the *Moral* Law.
2. That it is ſo far from making it null and void, that 'tis a real eſtabliſhment of it.

1. That the Goſpel does not make void the Law. But before I ſhew that it does not, let us reflect a little with what deteſtation and abhorrence the Apoſtle rejects the contrary Suppo-

Suppoſition; *God forbid*, ſays he. God forbid indeed that the Moral Law which had not only God for its Author, (for ſo had the Ceremonial Law too) but was written with his own immediate Hand, and was a Tranſcript of his own Moral Nature, a Draught of the Eſſential and Eternal Truth, Reaſon and Order of God, that was calculated for the whole intereſt of a Rational Nature, ſo as to anſwer all the ends both of private and ſocial Life, and withal ſo ſuited to the Moral *Taſte* and *Palate* of a Rational Mind, that it cannot but be highly approved by it, even in its moſt depraved condition, and in the midſt of all its Moral Diſorders; (for even the very Animal Man, as we learn from the A-
Rom. 6. 17. poſtle, *Conſents to the Law that it is good*,) God forbid I ſay, that that Law of the Lord which is an undefiled Law converting the Soul; that that Teſtimony of the Lord which is Sure, and giveth Wiſdom unto the Simple; that thoſe Statutes of the Lord which are Right and rejoice the Heart; that that Commandment of the Lord which is pure, and giveth

giveth Light unto the Eyes, according to the account of the *Pſalmiſt*; Or that that Law which is Holy, and that Commandment which is Holy, Juſt and Good, according to the account of St. *Paul* its ſuppoſed Adverſary; God forbid that ſuch a Law ſo accommodated both to the Welfare and to the Reaſon of Mankind, and that ſo ſtrikes in with the common Sentiments as well as Intereſt of Human Nature, that it cannot but be ever and ever liked and approved by it; (for even thoſe that ſin againſt it, and are eternally puniſh'd for it, both the Wicked upon Earth, and the Damn'd in Hell, muſt and do conſent to it, that it is good,) God forbid that ſuch a Law ſhould ever be null'd or made void.

Pſal. 19.

Rom. 7. 12.

But moſt of all, God forbid that it ſhould be made void by the *Goſpel* that *great Myſtery of Godlineſs, that Grace of God that has appeared to all Men, teaching us, that denying all ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, we ſhould live Soberly, Righteouſly and Godlily in this preſent World:* By the Goſpel, which

Tit. 2. 11, 12.

which the Angels publiſh'd with joy, as the greateſt Bleſſing to Mankind, and which they ſtill deſire to look into, and contemplate as a myſterious mixture of Mercy and Juſtice, of Severity and Indulgence, which comes recommended to the World as a moſt perfect and noble Inſtitution, both aiming at, and fitted for the higheſt exaltation of Human Nature, as a moſt excellent expedient for the promotion of Holineſs and Happineſs among Men, and as the laſt application of the Divine Phyſitian for the Recovery and Reſtoration of a ſinful and degenerate World; God forbid that ſuch an Inſtitution as this ſhould make void the Law. What, ſhall that which is to reform the Lives and Manners of Men, take away that which is to be the Rule and Meaſure whereby they are to be govern'd? Shall that which is to be a general Bleſſing to the World, take away the *Natural* Inſtrument of all Civil Happineſs? What, has the Goſpel no other way to ſave Sinners but by killing the Law which condemns them? And ſhall the Author of it who was

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ſo zealous to fulfil all Righteouſneſs, deſtroy that Law by his Death, which he was ſo careful to fulfil by the moſt exact obedience in his Life? Or if any of theſe things may be, yet is it to be imagined that God who had ſo tender a regard for the ſacredneſs and honour of his Law, as not to admit of Sinners to pardon, without an infinite Satisfaction for the violation of it, and would therefore rather ſend his own Son to ſuffer Death, than that the diſhonour done to his Law ſhould not be repaired, that he ſhould yet at the very ſame time intend to aboliſh that Law, the honour of which he was ſo ſeverely vindicating, and by that very act too whereby he vindicated it? What, ſhall the Death of the Son of God, one of whoſe great ends was to *condemn Sin in the Fleſh*, to ſhew forth God's infinite and irreconcilable diſpleaſure againſt it, and to aſſert the Dignity of his broken Law, the honour of which could not conſiſt with Impunity? ſhall, I ſay, the Death of Chriſt which was to vindicate the Divine Law, aboliſh that very Law whoſe honour it was intended to vin-

Rom. 8 3.

dicate? God forbid that any of theſe things ſhould be true, or that the glorious Goſpel of God ſhould come attended with ſo many Prejudices and Objections, with ſuch an odious, ſuch a ſcandalous Retinue as this. How then ſhall it find entrance and entertainment in the World? or how ſhall we expect to make Proſelytes to it, among ſenſible and underſtanding Men either of the Jews or of the Gentiles? How ſhall we hope to gain upon either of theſe, by ſuch a Goſpel as this? Will it not rather lie open to the Prejudice of both, and be deſervedly *to the Jews a Stumbling-block, and to the Greeks Fooliſhneſs*? But thanks be to God, this is not the caſe (how fond ſoever ſome Men are it ſhould be ſo) the Goſpel is not ſuch a lawleſs thing as ſome who would fain be ſo themſelves imagin; nor does the Faith of Chriſt make void the Law, which I now come more directly and diſtinctly to ſhew.

1 Cor. 1. 23.

But before I do ſo, I crave leave to lay down a neceſſary Diſtinction concerning both the Law and the Goſpel, which will be of excellent uſe and ſervice

ſervice for our clearer proceeding, and for want of which the beſt Accounts that have been given concerning this matter, are generally ſo very tangled and confuſed.

I obſerve therefore, that the *Law* may be conſidered either as a *Rule* of Life and Converſation, or as a *Covenant* of Life and Death: And the ſame I note alſo in reference to the Goſpel, that it may be conſidered either as a *Rule* of Life, or as a Covenant of Life and Death. This is the Diſtinction; the Reaſon and Uſe of it will appear in the Proceſs of our Diſcourſe.

Now this being premiſed, I ſay Firſt, That the Law as 'tis taken for the *Ceremonial* Law, is indeed truly made void by the Goſpel: As it never did oblige the Gentiles, ſo it does now no longer oblige the Jews, whoſe proper Inſtitution it was, nor does it at all concern Chriſtian Converts, ſo made either from Heatheniſm or Judaiſm; that is, it concerns no Body now, ſo as to oblige them to the obſervance of it, but is utterly void as

to all Purpoſes of a *Law*, and ſo Dead and Buried, as never to riſe again. And in this reſpect 'tis abſolutely true, what the Apoſtle ſays, that
Rom. 6. 14. *we are not under the Law, but under Grace.*

Not that we are to conceive that this is done by any formal and expreſs *Repeal*; there is no need of any ſuch thing: The Law of Rites and Ceremonies ceaſes of it ſelf, the Bound or Term of its Obligation being run out and expired. For it was ordained
Gal. 3. 19. as the Apoſtle tells us, *till the promiſed Seed ſhould come*; that is, Chriſt who
Rom. 10. 4. in another place is ſaid to be the *end of the Law*, as being typifyed and prefigured by it, and who therefore by his coming, without the formality of an expreſs Repeal, puts a final period to it. I ſay, of an *expreſs* Repeal; for there is in the Goſpel a *vertual* and *conſequential* Repeal of the Law, the Goſpel bringing into the World a new ſtate of things, with which the Obſervation of the Law is not conſiſtent. Particularly as to the *Prieſthood*; for by vertue of the old Law, there was ſet up a ſpecial and peculiar

peculiar ſtate in the Jewiſh Commonwealth, which had a ſupream Prieſthood Juriſdiction and Authority of its own: But now the Goſpel introduces a new ſpecial State, and a Prieſthood different from the former, having a Supream Juriſdiction over the whole World, and ſo is not conſiſtent with the other ſtate, and is therefore a Conſequential Repeal of it: According to that Poſition of the Author to the *Hebrews*, *The Prieſthood being changed, there is made of neceſſity a change alſo of the Law.* Heb. 7. 12.

Secondly, It muſt be allowed, that not only the Ceremonial, but even the *Moral* Law, ſo far as it is a *Covenant* of Life and Death, is made void by the Goſpel; that is, God does no longer require perfect and exact Obedience to the Moral Law, as the preciſe indiſpenſable condition of Salvation. Require it he does as a *Duty*, as we ſhall further ſee by and by, (otherwiſe the coming ſhort of it would be no Sin,) but he does not exact it as a *condition* of Life; ſo that though the Law continue in force as a *Rule*, yet 'tis aboliſh'd as a *Covenant*;

aboliſh'd by the very nature and conſtitution of the Goſpel, which exchanges Repentance for unſinning Obedience, as the condition of Salvation. Not but that the moſt exact Obedience is a *Duty* ſtill, we owe Obedience to every Precept of the Moral Law as much as ever, and we ſin in tranſgreſſing it; but it is now no longer the neceſſary condition of Salvation, ſo that the *Covenant* of Works is at an end, tho the *Law* of Works continue ſtill in its full force. For ſo

Thirdly, I find it neceſſary to affirm, that tho not only the Ceremonial, but even the Moral Law, conſider'd as a Covenant of Life and Death, is made void by the Goſpel, yet the Goſpel does not make void the Moral Law, as 'tis a *Rule* of Life and Manners. That the Moral Law thus conſider'd, is not made void by the Goſpel, I ſuppoſe to be the very point here intended by the Apoſtle, and that the proof of it may be the more orderly and diſtinct, it ſhall proceed according to this Three-fold gradation.

1. That

1. That the Moral Law, as 'tis a Rule of Life and Manners, is not in it ſelf *Aboliſhable.*

2. That ſuppoſe it might of it ſelf be aboliſh'd, yet 'tis not poſſible that the *Goſpel* ſhould ever aboliſh it.

3. Suppoſing it were poſſible for the Goſpel to aboliſh it, yet that *actually* and *de facto* it does not.

Each of theſe Heads might eaſily afford matter for a particular Diſcourſe, and perhaps can hardly be well diſcharged within a leſs compaſs; but ſpeaking to an intelligent Audience, that by a few hints can think out the reſt, I ſhall only briefly touch upon what is moſt conſiderable.

1. I ſay that the Moral Law as 'tis a Rule of Life and Manners, is not in it ſelf *Aboliſhable.* Now for the demonſtration of this, ſhould I ſay that the Moral Law is no other than a Syſteme of neceſſary and Eſſential Order and Juſtice, Holineſs and Vertue,

Vertue, Reaſon and Truth, and that 'tis indeed *Materially* conſidered no other than the very Eſſence of God, (who is Eſſential Truth and Reaſon,) and that the Love of this Eſſential Order, Juſtice, Reaſon and Truth, is no other than the Love of God, the very ſame thing with *Divine Charity*, and that therefore this Eſſential Order, *&c.* muſt be as neceſſary as eternal, and as immutable as God himſelf is, who therefore can no more cancel or aboliſh either the whole or any part of it, than he can deny himſelf; I ſay, ſhould I reaſon thus, I am ſenſible I ſhould diſcourſe very Abſtractly, but yet I queſtion not but that it would be upon ſure and certain Principles.

However, to avoid the natural Prejudice that is in ſome Men againſt very *Metaphyſical* Arguments, I ſhall chuſe rather to remark, that the Moral Law was given by God, not as an Erector of a particular Society under peculiar Circumſtances (which was the caſe of the Ceremonial Law) but as the Author of a *Rational Nature*, and was therefore fitted to the intereſts

intereſts of that Nature, and calculated for the whole ſtate of Mankind, as conſiſting of ſuch Precepts as were in themſelves neceſſary to be obſerved in order to the private and publick Happineſs of the World, according to the *Syſteme* into which it is caſt and fix'd by the great Author of Nature. For let the Moral World be caſt into what Syſteme you will, ſome Actions will reſult from it, that naturally make for its Beauty and Order, and others that tend as naturally to its diſorder: Even as let the *Natural* World be according to what Syſtem you pleaſe, ſome certain *Motions* will be for its Preſervation, and other ſome for its Corruption; which by the way, is enough to ſilence all the Cavils of the *Leviathan* againſt the eternal and immutable Reaſons of good and evil. Now I ſuppoſe the Matter of the Moral Law to be ſuch, that its Precepts carry a natural and neceſſary relation to the order and well-being of the World, according to the preſent Syſtem of it, and therefore muſt laſt as long as that Syſtem laſts; for being accommodated to the condition of

Human

Human Nature in general, and not to the exigence of this or that particular Nation, Time or Place, it muſt continue as long as its Reaſon, Foundation and Meaſure does; and if God will at any time diſſolve ſuch a Law as this, he muſt diſſolve *Human Nature* too.

But 2*dly*, Suppoſe the Moral Law to be of it ſelf aboliſhable, yet 'tis not poſſible that the *Goſpel* ſhould ever aboliſh it. This I may argue from the nature of the Goſpel, which is an Inſtitution of the ſame Author, and that ſerves to the very ſame end, the Order and Happineſs of the World, which can be obtained in no other way, and by no other means than by keeping up the diſtinction between *Vertue* and *Vice*, and by obliging Men to forbear the one and practice the other: That is in one Word, by keeping up the *Moral Law*, which therefore 'tis impoſſible that the *Goſpel* ſhould ever aboliſh. The *Manichees* indeed that ſuppoſed the Law and the Goſpel to come from Two contrary Principles, the one from a good God, and the other from an evil

evil God, were conſiſtent with themſelves, in ſuppoſing the latter wholly to deſtroy the former. But ſuppoſing as we do and ought, that they both proceeded from the ſame God, and that God infinitely good, and that conſequently could deſign nothing but the good of the World, which good is not attainable any other way, but by obliging Men to live according to the rules of Vertue and Honeſty, Piety and Religion, 'tis utterly impoſſible that upon this Suppoſition the Goſpel ſhould overturn the Moral Law, becauſe in ſo doing, it would contradict and overturn *it ſelf*, as purſuing the very ſame end, and which cannot be obtained but by the ſame means.

But beſides, I have another more peculiar and leſs heeded reaſon to think, that 'tis impoſſible for the Goſpel to aboliſh the Law, however otherwiſe in it ſelf aboliſhable. The Apoſtle thought it abſurd, to ſuppoſe that the Covenant made by God to *Abraham*, ſhould be null'd by the Law, which was 430 Years after; Gal. 3. 17. now if 'twas impoſſible that the Promiſe

Promiſe ſhould be voided by the Law, which was given ſo long after; then much more impoſſible is it that the Law ſhould be voided by the Goſpel, which was ſo long before it. But what, you'll ſay, was the *Goſpel* before the *Law*? Yes, as to the reality of its effect, tho not as to the ſolemnity of its Promulgation: For 'tis a great, tho a popular miſtake, to think that the Goſpel commenc'd at the Appearance of the *Meſſias*. Then indeed was the full and final ratification and conſummation of it, but the thing it ſelf was long before, even ever ſince the Ceſſation of the Covenant of Works, which went no further than the Perſon of *Adam*, and expired at his Fall; immediately upon which the Goſpel took place, and had thenceforward its conſtant effect, and Men were ſaved then as they are now, by Repentance and Faith in Chriſt, who is therefore ſaid to be
Rev. 13. 8. the *Lamb ſlain from the Foundation of the World.* Indeed the Law as 'twas a Covenant of Life and Death, was not *after* the Goſpel, but *before* it; but the Law as a Rule of Life given by *Moſes*, that whichwe call the Moral Law,

Law, was after the Goſpel. It was indeed before the Goſpel was fully confirm'd and publiſhed, but it was after the Goſpel had really taken place, and had had its real effects in the World. In this Senſe the Goſpel was before the Law; that is, the Goſpel had its real effects before the Moral Law was given, and therefore even upon this account 'tis impoſſible it ſhould be able to aboliſh it.

But 3*dly*, Suppoſe it were poſſible for the Goſpel to aboliſh the Law, yet this Suppoſition would do no great harm, ſo long as *actually* and *de facto* it does not: And that it does not, is moſt certain, for if it does, it muſt do it in one of theſe Two Capacities, either as 'tis it ſelf a *New Law* or Rule of Life, or as 'tis a *New Covenant*. Not as 'tis it ſelf a new Law; for ſo the Goſpel obliges us to the ſame things, and makes all that our Duty which the Law did, with ſeveral additional Improvements; for which I appeal to our Saviour's Sermon upon the *Mount*. It binds the very ſame Duties upon the World, only in higher degrees, and by more inga-

ingaging Sanctions. 'Tis commonly said indeed, that the Law required perfect and exact Obedience, whereas the Gospel requires only *Sincerity*; but this Proposition must be well distinguished, before it be admitted. 'Tis true indeed, the Gospel as a Covenant of Life and Death, requires only Sincerity, as administring Pardon upon Repentance; but the Gospel as a Rule of Life, (in which respect it is called in Scripture *the Law* Rom. 3.27. *of Faith*) requires more than Sincerity; it requires indeed the very same exactness of Obedience that the Law did, and what was our Duty before, is so still, for Pardon supposes Sin, and Sin necessarily supposes a contrary Obligation. The Gospel therefore thus consider'd, obliges to the same Duties that the Law did, and to the same degree of Obedience, and indeed is too much one and the same with it, to be a Discharge from it.

If therefore it does make void the Law, it must be in the other Capacity, as it is a new Covenant of Life and Death; and here indeed begin the

the *Abatements* of the *Gospel*, and this is that whereby it properly deserves that *Name*, as being a Message of good News to an impotent and depraved World, that were no more able to keep the *Gospel* as it is a meer *Rule* of *Life*, than they were to keep the *Law*. The Gospel therefore as a *Covenant*, is to come in and relieve those whom it would condemn as a *Rule*: But neither thus does it make void the Law. It does indeed thus consider'd, abate something of the Rigour of it, in allowing Pardon of Sin; but then at the same time it consults the honour, and keeps up the authority of it, in not dispensing this Pardon but upon the condition of *Repentance*. In that Sinners are admitted to Pardon by Repentance, the Law falls of its Rigor, but in that they are not admitted without Repentance, it preserves its Sacredness. The short is, the Gospel as it *accepts* Repentance, qualifies the severity of the Law, and as it *requires* Repentance, so it secures its Authority. But now that Repentance is the necessary and only condition of Pardon under the Gospel, and that notwithstanding

the satisfaction of Christ (the effect of which is not to render it *needless*, but only *available*,) I suppose to be too plain in the Scripture, and too well known to those whom I now bespeak, to need any proof. I rather take it for granted, as an acknowledg'd Principle, that the Gospel requires Repentance as the only condition of Pardon, and thence infer, that thereby it sufficiently provides for the authority of the Law, tho at the same time it indulges Pardon to those who *repent* of their Transgressing it. So that you see the Gospel every way consider'd, even on this its *milder* side, is no evacuation of the Law: So far from that, that 'tis also

2. *A real establishment of it.* It establishes it all over, and to all real intents and purposes, and in every part of it, even in those very parts where it seems most to make it void. As first of all to begin with the Ceremonial part of the Law, tho (as was acknowledged before) the Gospel evacuates all its power and efficacy, so that 'tis no longer of any force or obligation, either to Jew or Gentile, yet it does

does not make it an idle, uſeleſs, and inſignificant Inſtitution, (one proper ſenſe of the Word Καταργῶμεν,) but is ſo far from that, that it perfects its Deſigns, and accompliſhes its moſt retired Significations, in all things exchanging the ſhadow for the Subſtance; but more particularly by requiring that Purity of Heart, which was figured by the Rite of Circumciſion, and by ſubſtituting the Sufferings of Chriſt in the room of the Legal Sacrifices. So that tho it ſilences the *Obligation* of the Ritual Law, yet it eſtabliſhes all the real *purport* and *intendment* of it.

Then 2*dly*, as to the Moral Law conſidered as a Covenant of Life and Death, tho the Goſpel aboliſhes the Covenant of Works, yet it does at the ſame time and for the ſame reaſon greatly eſtabliſh both the deſign and the effect of it. For as by *Requiring* Repentance, it ſecures the honour and authority of the Law, (as was remark'd before,) ſo by *accepting* Repentance, it promotes its good effect and ſucceſs, and carries on its great end, Holineſs of Life, which

otherwiſe, (as the World now ſtands) could never be obtained. For the preſent Impotence of the World cannot bear ſo ſevere a Diſcipline, as that of the firſt Covenant, which ſince Men could not exactly keep, they would not care how much they did tranſgreſs. For what incouragement is there to ſet about ſuch a thing as a good Life under a Law that is impoſſible to be kept, and that allows no room for Repentance where 'tis not kept? The moſt immediate conſequence of this, is to make Men careleſs and deſperate: But now the Goſpel at once *requiring* and *accepting* Repentance, affords Men all the incouragement in the World, to repent and live well, ſince they cannot be pardoned and ſaved without it, and may with it; ſince 'tis neither a thing *ſuperfluous*, nor in *vain* to *Repent*. And herein lies the *great Myſtery* of *Godlineſs*, the Myſterious Contrivance of the Goſpel, for the promotion of good Life, effecting that by its indulgence, which the Law could not do by its Rigor; according to that of the Pſalmiſt, *There is Mercy with thee that thou mighteſt be feared.*

So

So that when the whole account is caſt up, the Law is rather a Gainer than a Loſer by the lenity of the Goſpel, by that Pardon which it indulges to Penitent Offenders; eſpecially conſidering, that the poſſibility of this Pardon upon Repentance, was procured by the Death and Satisfaction of Chriſt, whoſe alone Sufferings were a greater Juſtification and Vindication of the Law, than all the Sins of the whole World were a deſecration of it, and did it infinitely more Honour, than if Man had either exactly kept it, or eternally ſuffered for the violation of it: So greatly is the Law eſtabliſhed by the Goſpel, even in thoſe Two parts of it, wherein it ſeems to have received the greateſt Damage, *viz.* in reſpect of the *Ceremonial* part, and as 'tis a *Covenant* of Life and Death.

But 3*dly*, 'Tis yet more eſtabiſhed as 'tis a Rule of Life and Manners. Here the Goſpel does more abundantly ſtrengthen and confirm the Law, by repeating and renewing its Precepts, by giving them a freſh Promulgation, and ſtamping them with

the impreſs of a greater Authority, by clearing and improving the ſenſe and obligation of them, by adding to it new expreſs Precepts of its own, ſuch as that of Poverty of Spirit, Purity of Heart, the Love of Enemies, the Duties of Mortification and Self-denial, and the like; and laſtly, by inforcing both the old and new Precepts, by more powerful and awakening Sanctions, by better Promiſes, and by Severer Threatnings, and by a greater evidence and aſſurance of both, as bringing that Life and Immortality to light, which before was under great Darkneſs and Obſcurity, and which either Men did not heartily and fully believe, or upon very uncertain and unſatisfying Principles. In all which reſpects, the Goſpel is the greateſt Eſtabliſhment of the Law; Chriſt ſuſtains and holds up the Hands of *Moſes*, and *Chriſtianity* is ſo far from being againſt *Morality*, that 'tis the greateſt Improvement of it.

I have hitherto argued againſt the Voidance, and for the Eſtabliſhment of the Law upon rational Principles, and

and in a more abſtract way of Diſcourſe; but if you would have a more *ſenſible* Argument, and that is more of a Level with a popular Capacity, I conſider, that to be ſure Chriſt underſtood his own Religion (there is no doubt of that,) he knew the full extent of his undertaking for the World, and the utmoſt effect of his Death and Paſſion, and conſequently how far we are freed by it from the obligation of the Law, and yet he tells us expreſly, that he *came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it.* Mat. 5. 17. And accordingly to him that asked him what he ſhould do to have Eternal Life, his Anſwer was, *If thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments.* Mat. 17. 17. And again, to another that put him to the ſame queſtion, ſays he, *What is written in the Law? How readeſt thou?* Luke 10. 26. You ſee he refers him to the Law, to that Old (and as ſome fancy *Superannuated*) thing the Law, as that which was ſtill in force, and neceſſary to be conſcientiouſly kept and obey'd, in order to Eternal Life. So that if we will take an Idea of *Chriſtianity* from him who beſt underſtood it, the Bleſſed Author of it,

there is not that difference between that and *Morality*, which some imagin.

From the Measures laid down, we may now in few Words, form an exact Answer to that *great Question*, in giving an account of which, those that treat of it are generally so voluminous, and so intricate; namely, *How far the Gospel is an Abatement, and how far an Improvement of the Law?*

'Tis a gross mistake to think that the ease and advantage of Christianity consists in having any Abatements of *Moral* Duty; so far from that, that the Gospel as a Rule of Life, is the severer Institution of the Two, as being a more perfect and excellent Law. The Abatement therefore does not lie here, in the Gospel consider'd as a *Rule* of Life, but in the Gospel consider'd as a *Covenant* of Life and Death, which abates just so much from the Rigor of the first Covenant, as Repentance is less than exact Obedience; which exact Obedience tho the Gospel still exacts as a *Duty*, (for other-

otherwiſe the coming ſhort of it, would be no Sin,) yet it does not exact as the *Condition* of Eternal Life: So that in ſhort, the Goſpel as a Covenant, is an Abatement; as a Rule 'tis an improvement of the Law. But in neither Senſe an Evacuation, but rather an Eſtabliſhment of it.

I ſhall now in ſhort, make a practical application of what has been diſcours'd, which I ſhall direct

Firſt, To all Chriſtians in general.
Secondly, to the Publick Profeſſors and Teachers of Chriſtianity.

Firſt, To all Chriſtians in general. That ſince the Faith of Chriſt does not make void, but rather eſtabliſh the Law, they would take care how they entertain ſuch a notion of Chriſtianity, as to think it a *Charta* of *Licentiouſneſs*, and a Diſcharge from the Duties of Morality; that they would not look upon themſelves as Exempt and Priviledg'd Perſons, above Law and Obligation, but as Perſons under a very ſtrict and ſevere Inſtitution, that requires all Purity

rity of Heart, and all Holineſs of Life. That they would not flatter themſelves with fond conceits of God's particular Favour to their *Perſons*, without reſpect to their *Lives*, nor truſt to an empty and notional Faith in Chriſt, but rather apply themſelves to live in obedience to his Commands, and to walk as becomes his Goſpel. That as they are zealous in ſtanding faſt in that *Liberty* wherein Chriſt has really made them free, ſo they would ſhew the ſame zeal in ſtanding faſt in that *Duty*, and thoſe Moral Obligations wherein Chriſt has left them *bound*; yea, and has bound faſter upon them, ever remembring that of the Author to the *Hebrews* concerning Chriſt, that he is *become the Author of Eternal Salvation*; not to thoſe that apprehend him, apply him, cloſe with him, and roll upon him (according to the unſcriptural and unintelligible Cant of ſome Men's Divinity,) but *to thoſe that Obey him.*

Heb. 5. 9.

Secondly, That which hence offers it as applicable to all the publick Profeſſors and Teachers of Chriſtianity is this, that they would make it their Endeavour

Endeavour in the First place, to form in their own Minds a clear and distinct Notion concerning Christianity in general, and the terms of the New Covenant. That they would get a right general Idea of the Gospel, what it is in it self, and how it differs from the Law; what are its Abatements, and what its Improvements.

And after they have duly inform'd themselves, that they would make it their next great care to instruct those committed to their charge in this so weighty and Fundamental a point of Divinity. As for the *particular* disputes of Religion, I think 'tis no great matter how little common People are troubled with them; but sure there cannot be too much care taken in making them understand the general nature and design of Christianity, and the true difference between the Law and the Gospel, the Old Covenant and the New, the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace. And lest the Indulgence which the *Latter*, even in its very *Name* imports, should raise in them a false Idea of

of Licentiousness, great care should be taken so to state and explain the *Grace* of the Gospel, that it may not make void the Moral duties of the Law, and to press and inculcate the necessity of Repentance and good Life, as that which the Gospel both *commands* as a *Duty*, and *requires* as the necessary indispensable *Condition* of Pardon and Salvation.

The empty notional way of Preaching up the Doctrins of Faith in Christ, Justification by Faith only, Free Grace, Christian Liberty, and Imputed Righteousness, as 'twas in use in the late times, and is still among the Men of that stamp, has done a great deal of Mischief in this Kingdom, and has had (I doubt not) an ill effect upon the Lives of Men, and contributed as much as any one thing to the unmoralizing and debauching the Age. And as it has been of an ill influence *within* our selves, so I doubt not but that it has done as much mischief *without* too, and has been a general prejudice to the interest of *Christendom*. The Learned *Episcopius* (I remember) reckons it as one of the

*De causis Incredulitatis Judæorum*, Pag. 437.

Bars

Bars to the *Jews* Converſion; to which I add, and to the Heathens too: For what advantage would either Jew or Gentile gain by embracing Chriſtianity, if they muſt part with their Morality in the Exchange? This certainly is in the moſt proper and obvious ſenſe, *to make void the Law through Faith.* For if good Works are not neceſſary as the condition of my Pardon and Juſtification, for what are they neceſſary? And if they are not neceſſary at all, what reaſon has any Man to trouble himſelf about them?

I ſhall not at preſent ingage in that long nauſeous Diſpute about *Juſtification*, but ſhall rather offer ſuch a Remark, as may quickly put an end to it. I conſider therefore, that without all queſtion our Juſtification in this Life muſt proceed by the very ſame Meaſures that it will do at the laſt Day, when we ſhall publickly receive it from the Mouth of our Judge. But then I think the great Queſtion will be, how we have *Lived*, and what we have *done* in the Body, whether Good or Bad; and

as

as we ſhall be able to anſwer to this Queſtion, ſo we ſhall be either finally *Juſtified* or *Condemn'd*. He therefore Preaches Chriſt beſt, that inſiſts moſt upon the neceſſity of Obedience to his Commands; and he makes the beſt *Chriſtians*, that makes the beſt *Men*; and then is the *Goſpel* moſt truly repreſented, when it is ſo ſet forth, as to be an Eſtabliſhment of the *Law*.

*Now to God the Father*, &c.

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# A DISCOURSE CONCERNING *The Origin and the Relief of all Trouble and Uneaſineſs of Mind.*

Pſal. 94. 19.

*In the Multitude of my Thoughts within me, thy Comforts delight my Soul.*

AND 'tis well for the Soul of Man, that ſhe has Divine Comforts to take hold of for her Support, when all Human and Worldly Satisfactions fail, that ſhe can delight and ſolace her ſelf in God, when weary of her ſelf and of her own Thoughts, and can fix and repoſe the whole

whole endeavour of her Being, upon a firm and immoveable Center, when no longer able to sustain the weight of her own Desire. For were it not for this great *Sanctuary* of Human Nature, that Power of Thinking, which we value as the Priviledge of Man, would be to him an Instrument of the greatest Torment and Misery; the Wise Man might deservedly envy the happiness of the Fool, and a *Beast* that grazes in the Field, would be in a better condition than *both*.

Indeed our Thoughts are the occasion of much Trouble to us, as well as Delight; and as all Honour is attended with its proper Burthen, that which is the Priviledge of our Nature, is often the Instrument of our Disquiet, and our great Exaltation above the Beasts, makes us liable to several uneasinesses, from which the lowness of their Condition exempts them. They feel only the weight of *Present Evil*, and of Present Evils, the only one that they labour under, is *Pain*, (for I think 'twould be too great a Concession of Reason

Reaſon in them, to allow them capable of *Grief* of *Mind*;) and in *Pain*, all that they indure, is the direct impreſſion, without adding to their Miſery, by making impatient Reflections upon what they ſuffer. Whereas Man by the Advantage ſhall I ſay, or by the Misfortune of a quicker and more active Senſe, torments himſelf both with troubleſome Reflections upon what *has* been, and with jealous Apprehenſions and Expectations of what *may* be, and ſo feels Evils when they are paſt and gone, and when they are to come, as well as when they are preſent; and is beſides liable to Grief of Mind, as well as to Bodily Pain, and is withal ſo unkind to himſelf, as to aggravate both theſe by cloſe Reflections and paſſionate Applications of Spirit. So ſevere is the Tax that Nature charges upon Man for his Priviledge above the Beaſts.

And as this is the caſe of *Man* in reſpect of *Brute* Creatures, ſo in proportion, the ſame is alſo the caſe of *Wiſe* Men with reſpect to *Fools* and Perſons of leſs Diſcernment. 'Tis a thing of common Obſervation and

Experience, that Thinking and Contemplative Men, are very apt to be Melancholy; to which agrees that Reflection of the Wise Preacher, *In much Wisdom is much Grief, and he that increases Knowledge, increases Sorrow.* And there is a very satisfying Account to be given of this: The Foundation of that Content and Complacency we take in the things of this World, is Error and Mistake, (for 'tis impossible that vain things consider'd as vain, should please,) and both our Love to the World, and our delight in it, are purely owing to our ignorance of its Vanity: But now Wisdom discovers to us the Vanity of the World, gives a Man a lively and convincing sense of it, and so makes him uncapable of relishing its mean Enjoyments. The Wiser a Man grows, the harder he will be to be pleased, and the fewer things he will delight in; and we find that in every Stage of our Life, as our Years and Thoughts ripen and improve, we cast away several Diversions as insipid to our Maturer Sentiments, which before when we thought and understood less, afforded us great entertainment.

Eccl. 1. 18.

tertainment. That will ſerve to divert the Mind of a Fool, which will hardly ingage the *Notice* of a Wiſe Man; and the former will laugh extravagantly at that which from the later will hardly draw a Smile. The truth is, we out-grow our *Pleaſures* as we do our *Cloaths*, and the Objects of our Delight and Complacency, leſſen and decreaſe, as we improve in Reaſon and Experience, which by diſcovering to us more and more of the Worlds Vanity, makes us more and more Dead to it, and out of Love with it.

It does ſo; but in the mean while, what are we Gainers by the Bargain? We are indeed awaken'd, but 'tis from a pleaſant Dream; our Eyes are opened, but 'tis to diſcern our *Nakedneſs*; we are wiſe to our own Coſt, and are by our greater *Knowledge* robb'd of our *Content*. That which prop'd up and ſuſtained our Souls before, now fails and ſinks under us, and leaves us longing and reaching, and with pain hanging in a vaſt Emptineſs. And what a ſtrange fall of the Soul muſt this be, when all her

Worldly Props and Stays are taken away under her, and she has nothing left to repose her self on, and take pleasure in! What a horrible Hunger, what a Deprivation, what a Poverty, what a Desolation, what a dismal Solitude, what an Annihilation must there needs insue, something like that of *Death*, which breaks off all the ties of the Soul to the Creation, and separates her from all delightsom intercourse, with sensible Objects! And what a miserable state of Barrenness and Privation must this be, and what shall the Thoughtful and Contemplative Man do in such a wild Emptiness? The whole Creation fails and sinks under him, and he is not able to be his own Center, he must then sink down too into the depths of Sorrow and Despair, without Remedy or Hope of it, and be of all the Creatures upon the Earth the most miserable (and that for no other fault, but for being more Wise and Discerning.) Were it not that there is a God to supply the defect of the Creature, were it not that he could rest the weight of his Soul upon him, when his other Props are withdrawn

withdrawn from him, were it not that he could take Sanctuary in the Divine Fullneſs, when his more intent Thoughts have utterly convinc'd him of the World's Emptineſs, and were able to ſay here with the Pſalmiſt, *In the Multitude of my Thoughts within me, thy Comforts delight my Soul.*

We have in the Words the *Original* and the *Cure* of all the Sadneſs and Melancholy that is in the World. The Original of all Human Sorrow is our own Thoughtfulneſs, or the multitude of our Thoughts. The Cure and Remedy for this, is the Conſolation of God, or the Divine Comforts; for *In the Multitude of my Thoughts within me, thy Comforts delight my Soul*; wherein the Pſalmiſt may be ſuppoſed to ſpeak to this effect, When my Blood and Spirits, thoſe Natural *Springs* of the Soul, are ſtrongly touch'd and mightily ſet on work by ſenſible Impreſſions, and my Mind by reaſon of their quick and various Motion, ſallies out into a multitude of Thoughts; and when thoſe Thoughts make me ſad and heavy,

anxious and solicitous, as presenting to my view my own weakness and infirmity, and the universal vanity of all those seeming Props and Stays upon which my deluded Soul was apt to lean, the many great Calamities of *Life*, and the much greater Terrors of *Death*, the known Miseries of the *Present* State, and the Darkness and uncertainty of the *Future*, still urging me with fresh Arguments of Sorrow, and opening new and new Scenes of Melancholy, till my Soul begins to faint and sink under the Burthen she has laid upon her self: When I am thus *Thoughtful*, and thus *Sorrowful*, have thought my self into a pensive frame of Spirit, and look'd so long against the Light, as to darken and benight my Mind, then it is O my God, that I feel the relief of thy Divine Refreshments, and find my self supported and born up by the strong Tide of thy Suavities and Consolations, and revived by fresh Incomes of Life, which raise up my drooping Head, strike a Light in my Soul, and make me not only *dismis*, but even *forget* that Sorrow and Melancholy which my Thoughtful-

ness

neſs had brought upon me. So that here are two great and very important Concernments of Man pointed out and deſcrib'd, the true *Cauſe*, and the only *Remedy* of all his Sorrow: The Cauſe within himſelf, his own Thoughts; the Remedy in God, the Divine Comforts.

And Firſt, to begin with the Cauſe of Human Sorrow, our own Thoughtfulneſs, or the Multitude of our Thoughts within us. But here it is firſt of all ſuppoſed, that Man is a Thoughtful Creature, and has a multitude of Thoughts that paſs within him; and ſo indeed he has: Thoughtfulneſs is inſeparable at leaſt from a *waking* Soul, 'tis at once the Priviledge and the Diſeaſe of it, and there is no Man but who thinks a great deal, tho there be but a very few that think to any great purpoſe. The Spirit of Man is called in Scripture, *the Candle of the Lord*, and this Candle always burns, and flames and ſhines. It may well be compared to a Luminary, being a moſt active, reſtleſs Principle, and that is in ſuch an high and conſtant Ferment, that to ſtop its

Motion, you must extinguish its Light; for as long as this Candle is *alive*, it will burn and flame, and cast a Sphere of Light about it; for Thought rises upon Thought, and Desire upon Desire, Hope after Hope, and Fear after Fear, and these follow one another in an endless chase, so imitating the rapid course and agitation, and the constant flux and succession of a *Flame*.

And this is no other than the Natural result of the make and frame of Man. For since to the Power and Capacity of Thinking, Man has added an actual inclination to *Happiness*, 'tis but necessary that this his Inclination to Happiness should set his Thoughts on work, and imploy them in contriving means whereby this Happiness may be attained. Hang but a weight upon a Clock that has all the due inward composure of Springs and Wheels, and it will immediately put it into Motion. Now the Power and Capacity of Thinking in Man, answers to the inner Composure of the Clock, these are the Intellectual Springs and Wheels, and the

the inclination to Happineſs anſwers to the Weight that is hanged on it, and gives it actual motion. So that the general deſire of Happineſs being added to a Creature that has already all the Power and Capacity of Thinking, makes him think actually after the ſame manner, as the weight upon a Clock, whoſe Springs and Wheels are duly order'd and diſpoſed for motion, immediately ſets it a going. Here is the firſt Principle of all that infinite motion that is in the Soul of Man, it all derives it ſelf from this one Fountain, the general deſire of Happineſs; were it not for which, there would be an univerſal Reſt and Silence throughout the Soul, the intellectual frame would ſtand ſtill, as a Clock does when its Weights are taken off: But as long as this Weight preſſes, the Motion continues. For indeed the general deſire of Happineſs is the proper weight of the Soul, the great *Arterial Pulſe* of Human Nature, that awakens and ſtirs up its Dormant Powers, and quickens the whole Rational frame into Life and Motion.

And

And accordingly if we reflect upon what passes within our selves, we shall find that all those infinite workings of the Soul, those innumerable Thoughts, Imaginations, Remembrances, Willings, Hatings, Desirings and Aversations, Hopes, Fears, Joys and Sorrows that cross and cut one another in endless *Rencounters*; in a Word, that the whole motion of the Soul is nothing else but one general Concern, one various *Thought* about Happiness. This is the Result of all that passes within the Soul, hither all her Motions and Operations tend, which is a plain sign that 'tis this that first sets her on work, and is the principle of all her Motion. And indeed how can it otherwise be, but that the desire of Happiness which is the natural Bias of every Soul, should beget and excite in us a Thoughtfulness concerning it, and the Means whereby it may be attained?

But altho our Thoughts take their first and necessary Rise from the natural desire of Happiness, as a Clock does its motion from the weight that hangs on it, yet so far do they degenerate

nerate from their *Original*, as to be themſelves the cauſe of all our Miſery. For the whole Miſery of Man is reſolvible into *Pain* and *Grief*, and both theſe are cauſed by our Thoughts. As for *Pain*, 'tis certain 'that 'tis the Soul alone that feels it, (as being the true ſeat of all Senſation,) and that 'tis by its *Thoughtfulneſs* that it does ſo; for indeed Pain it ſelf is nothing elſe but a diſagreeable Modification of the Soul, an *uneaſie Thought* occaſioned by ſome outward Bodily impreſſion: But that is only the remote occaſion, 'tis to our Thinking that we directly owe all our Pain. For let the impreſſion made upon the Body be never ſo dolorifick or apt to excite Pain, yet if you will ſuppoſe the Soul either not to think at all, or to have its Attention wholly withdrawn from the ſuppoſed impreſſion, and intirely fix'd and ingaged upon ſome other Object, there will be no ſuch thing as that troubleſom ſenſation we call *Pain*; as by experience we find in Men that either are in a deep Sleep that wholly *ſilknces* their Thoughts, or in a Trance or Extaſie that ſtrongly *diverts* them. Accordingly

ingly we have Two Methods of dealing with Men in Pain, either by caſting them into a deep Sleep or Stupor, or by what we call *Divertiſement*; by which it clearly appears, that our Thinking is the true cauſe of all our Pain. As it is alſo

Secondly, Of all our *Grief*. 'Tis I confeſs ſtrange, that the Soul of Man which ſo infinitely loves it ſelf, and whoſe whole Inclination is to *Happineſs*, ſhould be its own Tormentor; and yet 'tis moſt certain, that all thoſe innumerable Troubles and Diſquiets whereby her natural Reſt and Tranquillity is broken and diſturb'd, ariſe from her own Thoughts. As theſe will be the Hell of Wicked Spirits hereafter, ſo they are the preſent Rack and Affliction of the Soul here, and all the uneaſineſs that ſhe either feels and complains of in her ſelf, or pities in others, is derived from them. For indeed our Joy and our Grief as contrary as they are, both in themſelves, and in their effects, proceed from one and the ſame general Principle, and are like Two *Grafts* of a contrary kind that grow upon one and

and the ſame *Stock*; they are both born within our ſelves, and proceed from our *Thoughts*.

For whence elſe ſhould our Grief proceed? It cannot come from any thing *without* the Soul; for that which is without the Soul, cannot act upon it, conſequently cannot any wiſe affect it, and conſequently cannot grieve or puniſh it. It muſt be therefore from ſomething *within* the Soul, and what can that be, but her own *Thoughts?* Theſe therefore are the Inſtruments of her Diſquiet; nothing of all that is either thought, ſaid or done in the World, can have any direct and immediate influence upon my Soul; ſhe can only ſuffer by her own Thoughts. The Thoughts of other Men may indeed impreſs certain Motions upon their *own Bodies*, and thoſe Motions may be communicated to *other* Bodies, and this may work a change in external Nature; but what is all this to *my Mind*? And ſo again the Words and Actions of Men, may make an alteration either in the Political or the Natural ſtate of things, but ſtill how is *my Mind* concern'd

concern'd in all this, any otherwise than as she is pleased to interest her self in it, and to take an occasion from this to vex and afflict her self by her own Thoughts, by those uneasie Reflections she passes upon either the *Motions* of the *Natural*, or the *Events* of the *Moral* World. This is that which truly wounds and pierces her, all other things drop short and cannot reach her.

But to let in a little more light upon this, by an *Instance*; Suppose I hear of some ill Report concerning me, something spoken to my disadvantage; 'tis most certain that this is a thing wholly without me, and intirely separated from me, and therefore of it self can have no manner of effect upon me, so as to make me really better or worse, more happy or more miserable; how comes it to pass then, that I am troubled at such a Report? What does the Report do to me, or upon me? Does it of it-self immediately and directly wound or hurt my Soul? No, it does not so much as touch it, as being altogether without it, and separate from it. How then

then come I to be diſturb'd about it, but only becauſe tho that be really ſeparate from me, yet my Soul fantaſtically joins with it, and by a falſe imagination, takes it for a real evil, and ſo diſturbs her ſelf with her own Fancy. The thing in it ſelf can be no real evil to my Soul, becauſe 'tis without me, and I am not really the worſe for it; but I give it the Appearance of an evil, and make an *imaginary union* with it in my own fancy, and ſo vex and diſcompoſe my ſelf: So that 'tis not the ill Report that goes concerning me, but my *Fantaſtical Opinion* about it, that gives me the Trouble and the Diſturbance. And the like may be conceived in all other caſes. We may lay the Blame, and we generally do, upon things without, upon this or that Affront, or this or that croſs Accident, but upon due examination it will be found, that we muſt come nearer home for the Authors of our Diſcontent, and that they that trouble us are of our own Family, and are no other than our own Thoughts. So that now if a Man ſhall put himſelf that Queſtion of the Pſalmiſt, *Why art thou ſo troubled,*

*troubled, O my Soul, and why art thou so disquieted within me?* The Answer is ready, thy Trouble is from thy self, they are thy own Thoughts that disquiet thee.

And having thus opened the true Fountain of all our grief and uneasiness, I come now to apply the *Remedy*, which we need not go far to seek, since the very next Clause of the Text directs us to it. And 'tis a Remedy that is as near us as the Disease, *for in the Multitnde of my Thoughts within me, thy Comforts delight my Soul.* When my own Thoughts trouble and discompose me, then thy Comforts refresh and relieve me. So that the Divine Comforts are the proper Cure and Remedy of all that Sadness and discomposure of Mind, which is occasion'd by our own Thoughts: The *Divine Comforts*; by which I suppose we may aptly enough understand these Three things;

1. The Chearing and Refreshing influences of the Holy Spirit.
2. The Joys and Satisfactions of Devotion, and a Religious Life.
3. The

3. The Considerations of the Nature and Perfections of God.

All these I think may very properly come within the notion of *Divine Comforts*, as being either such as proceed directly from God, or which result from the Service we do to him, or which spring from the Thoughts and Contemplations we exercise about him. These are indeed very Divine Comforts, and such as will not fail to give us ease and refreshment under the most cleaving and tormenting Troubles our Thoughts can inflict upon us.

As First of all, to begin with the First kind of Divine Comforts, the Chearing and refreshing influences of the Holy Spirit, who in Scripture is emphatically stiled *the Comforter*; and one of whose principal and immediate Fruits is Joy. We have no reason to think any Trouble of our Minds so great, but what these Comforts of God will be able to allay: For this is that Divine Consolation, that internal and unexpressible Sweetness and Delectation, that Mystical

John 15. 26. Gal. 5. 22.

Unction, that Spiritual Taste, that Intellectual Savour, that Refectory Grace, that inebriating Wine, that Extatical Joy of the Holy Ghost; in a Word, that Peace of God which passes all Understanding, and that Blessed Anticipation of Heavenly Delights, which has so fill'd, overflow'd and ravish'd some Holy Souls, as to raise them above the World and themselves too, to make them quite insensible of all Pain and Sorrow, and to despise all the Good and all the Evil of this Life. Of this some Solitary and Contemplative Persons have *spoken* very high and great things; and others of less Thought, but more Piety and Devotion, have *felt* greater: Witness that strange and otherwise unaccountable Appearance, the Chearful and Serene Behaviour of several of the old *Martyrs* in the midst of the Flames, who were so far from expressing any Impatience in their *Fiery Trials*, that they were not so much as sensible of any *Pain*. We cannot here suppose that the Power of God miraculously restrain'd that of the Fire, (as in the case of the Three Children,) because it had its usual

effect

effect upon their Bodies; nor have we any need to ſuppoſe that the ordinary Law of Communication between ſuch certain Motions upon the Body, and ſuch ſenſations in the Soul, was by the Power of God miraculouſly interrupted: No, The account of this matter will be more ſimple, and conſequently more probable to ſuppoſe, that the Holy Spirit of God (the great *Comforter*,) did diffuſe ſuch a Divine Sweetneſs through the Souls of thoſe happy Sufferers (if thoſe that felt nothing may be ſo called,) as either ſo withdrew their Attention from the Impreſſions made upon them, that they had no ſuch thing as any dolorous Senſation, or ſo temper'd and qualified it, or rather outweigh'd it by a ſtronger ſentiment of *Pleaſure*, that it was not in the leaſt uneaſie to them; that is, in one Word, it either *hinder'd* it, or *overcame* it. To ſuch an high degree are the Divine Conſolations able to delight the Soul, when God is pleaſed more liberally to diſpenſe them. Of theſe the Pſalmiſt may be ſuppoſed to ſpeak, when he ſays, *The Lord is my Shepherd, therefore can I lack nothing.* Pſal. 23.

*He ſhall feed me in a green Paſture, and lead me forth beſide the Waters of Comfort. Yea, though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no Evil, for thou art with me, thy Rod and thy Staff ſhall comfort me.* It ſeems in the ſtrength of theſe Heavenly Refreſhments, he could tread the moſt diſmal and uncomfortable Path the Feet of Man can ever walk in, the *Valley of the ſhadow of Death*, without any concern or trouble. And indeed one Beam of this Divine Conſolation, would ſtrike a light into the ſhades below; brighten the Minds of the Infernal Spirits, and make even the Damn'd in Hell forget their Miſeries. But theſe Divine Comforts being more rare and extraordinary, and ſuch as are not ſo much at our own Diſpoſal, as being immediate Communications of God, I ſhall proceed to thoſe that are more within our own Power, and therefore haſten to conſider,

2. The Joys and Satisfactions of Devotion, and a Religious Life: By which may be underſtood either that Pleaſure wherewith a good Man *does* his

his Duty, performs acts of Piety and Religion, or that Pleaſure wherewith he reflects upon it when done. The former is the pleaſure of the *Action*, the latter is the pleaſure of the *Review*, and is the ſame with what we call the Comfort of a good *Conſcience*; and both theſe are very great and ſtrong Pleaſures, far beyond thoſe of Senſe, which ſo captivate and inſlave Mankind. 'Tis firſt a great Pleaſure for a Man to do his Duty; he is then in his moſt natural ſtate and order, and upon his moſt natural Employment, doing that which beſt becomes him, is moſt perfective of his true ſelf, and moſt ſuitable to the original genius and conſtitution of his Soul, which is then well in *Tune*, and in a right ſtate of *Health*, from which Pleaſure is always inſeparable. And ſo Secondly, 'tis a great pleaſure for a Man to reflect upon his Duty done; 'tis to conſider and recollect with himſelf, that he has made a right uſe of his Powers and Faculties, that he has acted as he ought, and lived according to the Order and Perfection of his Nature, and that thereby he has ingaged the beſt and greateſt Be-

ing on his side, made God his Friend, and secured his main Point, the interest of his Soul to all Eternity; than which, what can be a more pleasing and more satisfying consideration? Of the former Pleasure, that of doing acts of Religion, we may form a general conjecture from what the Psalmist says of one of them in particular,

Psal. 63. 6. *My Soul shall be satisfied even as it were with Marrow and Fatness, when my Mouth praises thee with joyful Lips.* The Figure is strangely bold, and the Expression strong and flaming, importing a sort of Spiritual Luxury, an intellectual Sensuality in the Service of God. Of the latter pleasure, that of reflecting upon our Duty performed, we may take an account from

Prov. 14. 14. that of *Solomon*, *A good Man shall be satisfied from himself*; and from that of

2 Cor. 1 12. St. *Paul*, *Our Rejoycing is this, the Testimony of our Conscience, that in Simplicity and Godly Sincerity, we have had our Conversation in the World.* And 'tis considerable that he speaks it after an account of some very extraordinary Troubles that came upon him in *Asia*, and makes this very thing to be that which supported him under them,

and

and to be the very Comfort and Conſolation of God. For ſays he, *Bleſſed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Comfort; who comforteth us in all our Tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any Trouble, by the Comfort wherewith we our ſelves are comforted of God.* Then a little after, *For we would not Brethren have you ignorant of our Trouble which came to us in* Aſia, *that we were preſſed out of Meaſure above ſtrength, inſomuch that we deſpaired of Life. But we had the Sentence of Death in our ſelves, that we ſhould not truſt in our ſelves, but in God which raiſes the Dead; who deliver'd us from ſo great a Death.* Then a little after adds, as expreſſing the manner and means of his Deliverance, *For our Rejoycing is this, The Teſtimony of our Conſcience,* &c. This it ſeems was the Comfort whereby he was comforted of God, and which held him up under, or rather *above his Trouble.* Here then is another Remedy of Grief, another Sanctuary for a troubled and diſconſolate Soul. When Thoughts ariſe in thy Heart, and Troubles from thoſe

Thoughts, when thy Mind is dark and Cloudy, and all the Regions of thy Soul are overcast, then betake thy self to thy *Oratory*, either to thy *Closet*, or to the *Church*, and entertain thy Soul with the Pleasures of Religion, and the Satisfactions of a clear Conscience, which will at least divert, if not wholly deliver thee from thy Trouble: So that in this Sense also thou shalt find the Service of God to be *perfect Freedom*. But in case thy Trouble be very obstinate and difficult to be turn'd out of its course, then make use of the last and most efficacious Remedy, and apply thy self

3. To the consideration of the Nature and Perfections of God. The Psalmist had often tried this Expedient, and as often found the success of it, and therefore as one convinc'd and sa-
Psal. 77. 3. tisfied of its efficacy, says he, *When I am in heaviness, I will think upon God.* This indeed is a most comfortable Contemplation to a Mind that shall be duly disposed for it, and such as will either remove or swallow up all the disquiet that other Considerations

can

can bring upon us, all the Trouble that can ariſe from the whole compaſs of Thought.

As for inſtance, when in the Multitude of my Thoughts within me, I happen to fall into that *Carteſian* Doubt and Perplexity, that it may be there is an infinitely Powerful, Envious, Subtle and Crafty Being, that makes it his buſineſs to put Cheats and Fallacies upon me; and that it may be, I am ſo made and conſtituted in my natural frame, as to be then moſt deceived, when I apprehend and conceive things moſt clearly and diſtinctly, and conſequently that there is no ſuch thing as *Truth*, *Knowledge* or *Certainty* to be had; then I conſult and contemplate the Idea and nature of God, which I find to include infinite Perfection, wherein is alſo included Goodneſs, Truth and Veracity; whence I collect, that he is a Being infinitely Good, and infinitely True, and the Fountain of all Light and Knowledge, and that therefore he can no more be the Author of any Error in me, than he can be ſubject

ject to any in himself; which presently puts an end to this Scruple.

Again, When my Thoughts represent to me in my Retirements, a true Idea of this World, and of the whole state of Man in it, that they are both of them extreamly vain, yea, *altogether Vanity*; when I consider the utter Emptiness, Nullity and Disappointment of all Worldly Fruition, and am troubled to see the many little props and stays of my Soul upon which I formerly rely'd, to yield to my Weight, and sink away so fast under me, and not only so, but am thence drawn into a Melancholy Suspicion that it may be this, is the nature of *all fruition*, and that it will be so in the other state too, when I come to enjoy it, and so begin to have the same doubt now concerning *Good*, which I had before concerning *Truth*; I say, when my Thoughts have cast me into this Damp and Perplexity, then I turn the Stream of them another way, and meditate upon the infinite Richness, Fulness and All-sufficiency of God, that *Centrality* of the Divine Nature, whereby he is fully satisfied

ſatisfied in himſelf, and capable of being an object of Acquieſcence to as many as ſhall have the fruition of him; which one thing duly conſidered, will both ſupport me under the Thought of the *preſent* World's Vanity, and eaſe me of all Suſpicions concerning the *next*.

Again, When in my more melancholy and gloomy Hours, among the Multitude of my Sadder Thoughts, this is one, that Men are not dealt with according to their Works good or evil, but that there are more *hidden* Cauſes of Mens eternal Conditions, that ſome are from all Eternity mark'd out for Ruin by the abſolute Will of God, and that I my ſelf am one of thoſe Miſerable Reprobates, abſolutely rejected from *Grace* and *Glory*; when this black Thought begins to orecaſt my Soul, and draw over it a Veil of Darkneſs and Deſpair, then I conſider the breadth and length, the depth and height of the Goodneſs of God, and that Love of his that paſſes Knowledge, how Great and Generous a Being he is, how ſlow to Anger, and how abundant in Goodneſs

neſs and Truth, how infinitely remov'd from Envy, Malice, Prejudice and all ſtraitneſs of Mind, and all thoſe little illiberal Paſſions which make up what we call *Ill Nature*; which while I ſeriouſly and attentively conſider, I find my darken'd Soul begin to break out of her Eclipſe, to diſmiſs all her Jealous Apprehenſions of God, and all her Fears concerning her ſelf, being no longer able to ſuſpect ſuch harſh and arbitrary Proceedings from ſo Great, ſo Good, and ſo juſt a Being.

And ſo again, to inſtance once more, whenever my Mind is anxious and ſolicitous about the great Power and Malice of *Evil Spirits*, ſo as to be afraid what they may do to me while I am in this World, but more eſpecially when ſeparated from the Body, I ſhall enter into their more peculiar Territories, into the World of Spirits: When I am in a thoughtful concern what ſhall then become of me, and who will then take Charge of me, that I may not be either ſeiz'd and caught up by thoſe to whom I do not belong, whoſe Portion I am not, or

or wander and be loſt in thoſe unknown Regions, and among thoſe numberleſs Troops of Spirits, (for *what is my Soul in ſuch a Multitude of Creatures* ?) then I ſet my ſelf to conſider the Power, the Wiſdom and the Providence of God, who has ſet inviolable Laws and Meaſures to both Worlds, and diſpoſes of all things ſweetly, according to thoſe Laws; who has given his Angels charge concerning us, to keep us in all our ways, and whoſe Goodneſs and Juſtice oblige him to take care of all thoſe in the next World, who truly and faithfully ſerve him in this. I recollect again with the Pſalmiſt, that *the Lord is my Shepherd*, and therefore *tho I walk through the Valley of the ſhadow of Death I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy Rod and thy Staff ſhall comfort me.*

And thus is the Conſideration of God improveable to the eaſe and quiet of our Minds, under the ſeveral uneaſie Sentiments that may diſcompoſe them. Nor is it only a Remedy againſt the *Pain* of our Many Thoughts, but even againſt the very *Multitude*

*Multitude* of them too; for Multitude of Thoughts, is from Multitude of Deſires. As we Think in general, becauſe we Deſire, ſo the more things we Deſire, the more we ſhall Think of. Here then is the Head of all our Diſtraction; we think and are troubled about many things, becauſe our Deſire is divided among many Objects: And how comes our Deſire to be ſo divided, but only becauſe the *Creatures* are the Object of them. The proper Remedy then for this, will be to apply our Minds to the Contemplation of God, and the more we Contemplate him, the more we ſhall Love and Deſire him, and the more we Deſire him, the more our Thoughts will Concenter on him; and this will Recollect and *Simplify* our Souls, and free us of that Diſtraction of Mind, that Diſperſion of Thought which is ſo great an hindrance to us in the courſe of our *Studies*, in the management of our *Affairs*, but moſt of all in the Offices of our *Devotion*.

And thus have I pointed out both the Origin and the Cure of all Human Trouble, and ſhewn how in the

Multitude

Multitude of our Thoughts within us the Divine Comforts do delight our Souls. And 'tis they only that can do it; Miſerable are all other Comforters, and vain is all the Comfort that they adminiſter. Neither Philoſophick Diſcourſes, nor the common Arts of Diverſion, Muſick, Dancing, Drinking or Gaming, can afford any great or long Relief to a troubled Spirit, its weight will ſoon make way through theſe ſlight things, and indeed will never find a ſtay ſtrong enough to bear it up, till it repoſe itſelf upon the Divine Comforts. After all Experiments, its laſt Sanctuary muſt be in *God* and *Religion*.

The Conſideration of what has been hitherto Diſcours'd, will now lead us to a double Reflection, one upon the Condition of Wicked Men in this World, and the other upon the Condition of Damn'd Souls in the World to come.

And Firſt as to the Condition of Wicked Men in this World. If the Divine Comforts are the proper and only Cure for all the Trouble, occaſion'd by

by our Thoughts, then we muſt conclude the Condition of all ſuch Men to be very Miſerable: For as their Thoughts are apt to give them moſt Trouble, as being for the moſt part irregular and full of diſorder, ſo they are the leaſt capable of being reliev'd by the Comforts of God; for as for the Spirit of Conſolation, him they have long ſince quench'd and extinguiſh'd; as for the Joys of Religion, them they underſtand not, and are ready to Smile at the mention of them; as for the Teſtimony of Conſcience, they have either no Senſe of any ſuch thing, or ſuch as is only Tormenting and Uneaſie. Then laſtly, As for meditating upon God, either he is not in all their Thoughts, or they think on him with horrour and amazement, and are ſo far from taking any Comfort in him, that they wiſh him out of being, as their great *Objection* that chills the Fire of their Blood, damps their Humour, and is an ever-returning Check upon their Mirth and Jollity. So then they have no part nor Lot in theſe Divine Comforts, tho at the ſame time they want them moſt. This Noble Remedy is

no

no Remedy to them, the Conſtitution of their Mind is quite croſs to it, ſo as to defeat all its Sovereign Power and Vertue. They muſt then either obſtinately bear their Trouble, or take up with Human Supports, ſeek Repoſe in their Thorns, roll themſelves from one Vanity to another, and try to fill and ſatisfy their Hungry Souls with variety of Emptineſs, with a *Multiplied nothing*.

Then Secondly, As to the Condition of Damn'd Souls in the other World, it may be conſider'd, that if now the whole Trouble of the Soul be from the inward workings of her own Thoughts, how great will this Trouble be, in how quick a current will it flow, when the Powers of the Soul ſhall be more awaken'd, and its Thoughts more vehemently ſet on work, as it will be in the other ſtate! God will then proceed to the higheſt actuation of the Soul, ſound an Alarum to all her Dormant Powers, and wind them up to the very pitch of Action; ſo that her whole Life ſhall be but one conſtant *ſtretch* of Thought. And what a Miſery muſt it be to the

Soul, to have her Thoughts ſo mightily ſet on work, and not to have a God to reſt them on! To have her Faculties inlarged, and her Deſires increaſed, and not one Divine Comfort to imploy thoſe Faculties, or to gratifie thoſe Deſires! Never certainly will that Saying of the Wiſe Man be ſo highly verified as then, *In much Wiſdom is much Grief, and he that increaſes Knowledge, increaſes Sorrow.* The activity of the Soul will then be her great Torment, and the Multitude of her Thoughts will multiply her Trouble. There is nothing within the whole compaſs of intelligible Objects, but what ſhe will then think upon, and ſhe can think upon nothing but what will aggravate her Miſery, every new Thought will be a new Trouble. Whether ſhe looks within or without, backward or forward, upon Time or Eternity, upon God or the Creature, ſtill ſhe will have a moſt uncomfortable Proſpect; ſo infinite indeed are the Thoughts that will then combine to afflict her, that I ſhall not offer at an account of them; only I obſerve, that among the Multitude of her other Thoughts, the Soul

Soul will then have a true Idea, a thorough Conception far different from what ſhe has now, or can now imagin, of the utter *vanity* of the whole *Creation*; and to ſee and feel that great Prop at once fail and ſink under her, and nothing more ſolid, ſubſtituted in its room; to find her ſelf looſen'd and uncenter'd from the Creature, and not lodg'd upon God; to have no manner of Taſte or Reliſh for falſe Goods, (becauſe ſhe now ſees their Vanity,) and to be utterly deprived of the true, and ſo to lean with the full weight and ſtreſs of her Deſire upon nothing. What a Miſery, what a Hell muſt this be! 'Tis what perhaps we cannot well underſtand now, and I pray God we never may.

In this Life the Soul has always ſome Prop or other to ſtay her ſelf upon: If ſhe be not ſo well diſpoſed as to delight her ſelf in God, and reliſh his Divine Sweetneſs, then ſhe can make a ſhift to ſolace and entertain her ſelf with the *Creatures*; or if upon a clear thorough ſight of their Vanity, ſhe cannot find any ſatis-

faction in ſuch empty Enjoyments, then ſhe can turn her ſelf to a more ſubſtantial Good, and comfort her ſelf in her *God*. But to have neither God nor Creature, to be deſtitute of both, (which is the caſe of a Damn'd Soul.) none but thoſe who ſhall experiment this condition, can ever have a juſt Idea of it.

It is therefore the great Concern, and ought to be the great care of us all, ſo to govern our Thoughts here, that they may not be a Torment to us hereafter; to make ſuch a right uſe of our Intellectual Powers and Faculties now, that when they ſhall be more heighten'd and enlarged, they may have a proportionable Object to entertain them, that when we have moſt *Thoughts*, we may have moſt and beſt *Comforts*, even the infinite Conſolations of God, which will bear the *Teſt* of Thinking, and in the Multitude of our moſt elevated Thoughts will *eternally* delight our Souls.

# A DISCOURSE OF *The Natural and Moral Union of the Soul with God, and of the Perfection that accrues to it from thence.*

Pſal. 73. 28.

*It is good for me to draw near to God.*

THE natural and inward Perfection of Human Nature bears ſo little proportion to the Capacities and Deſires of the ſame nature, and Men are withal ſo inwardly conſcious and ſenſible of this

Diſproportion, between what they *are*, and what they naturally *crave* and *aſpire* to, that they all with one general Conſent agree (like Men in a Famin,) to go out of themſelves and their own Homes, to ſeek abroad for Proviſion, to ſtrengthen their ſlender Intereſt by ſome Foreign Allie, and to unite themſelves to ſome *other* Being, for the further Perfection and Supplement of their *own*.

Thus far all Men agree *to go out of themſelves* for their Good and Happineſs: And perhaps 'tis the only thing wherein they do ſo, and you will ſcarce ever after this be able to meet with them all together again; for no ſooner are they out of themſelves, but they immediately *divide* and take ſeveral Paths; and apply themſelves to ſeveral Objects, as their Reaſon or their Senſe leads them, ſome directing their Motion towards *God*, and ſome towards the *Creature*.

Thoſe that direct their Motion towards the Creature, travel ſo thick and full, in ſuch Crouds and Companies, that they have ſcarce room to paſs

paſs in without elbowing and juſtling one another; ſo that they are ready to quarrel about the *Way* as well as the *End*; while in the mean time, thoſe that direct their Motion towards God, are ſo very *thin* and *few*, (here and there a ſtragling Paſſenger,) that did they not travel by a good Light, and were well aſſured of their way, the very *ſingularity* of their Choice would be ſuch an Objection againſt it, that they would be tempted to change Roads, and be where there is moſt Company.

But *the Path of the Juſt* (as the Wiſe Man tells us,) *is as the ſhining Light*, a Path which like the *Milky Way* in the Heavens, diſcovers and diſtinguiſhes it ſelf by its own Brightneſs; and thoſe that travel in this Bright Shining Road, are *Children* of *Light*, of good Senſe and Underſtanding, of great Judgment, and of great Conſideration, very Wiſe, Knowing and Diſcerning Perſons. And they ſhew their Judgment by the Wiſdom of their Choice, by the Excellency of their Aim, in that they do not propoſe or endeavour an Union of themProv 4.18

ſelves with the *Creature*, (which would be but to joyn *Cypher* to *Cypher*, Vanity to Vanity, whence the Product would be *nothing*,) but with him who is their true and only Good, and whoſe Union will perfect and better their Natures. Of the number of which few Wiſe Perſons that travel in this *ſhining Path*, is the *Pſalmiſt* here in the Text, who through all the Pomp and Glitter of a Court, could ſo clearly diſcern his true Good, that he would not go out of himſelf to join himſelf with that which is as vain as himſelf; but thus expreſſes and juſtifies his *Better* Choice, *It is good for me to draw near unto God.*

*To draw near unto God*; which rendring is very much according to the Hebrew, and well expreſſes the ſignification of the Word קרבת in the Text. In the Septuagint it is τὸ προσκολλᾶσθαι τῷ Θεῷ, *to be glued faſt to God.* And ſo the Vulgar Latin, *Bonum eſt mihi Deo adhærere, It is good for me to adhere or ſtick cloſe to God*; which is alſo follow'd by our other Engliſh Tranſlation, *It is good for me to hold me faſt by God.* But this variety of Expreſſion,

preſſion, makes no material difference in the Senſe, which comes all to one at laſt, and furniſhes us with one and the ſame Matter for our Diſcourſe and Meditation. For we have here the Pſalmiſt's Choice, and the Reaſon or Juſtification of that Choice: The Choice implied, the Reaſon of it expreſt. His Choice here implied, is to be nearly and cloſely united to God; his Reaſon for it is, becauſe ſuch an Union will be for his Good, and redound to the Happineſs and Perfection of his Being. *It is good for me to draw near unto God.* But to make my Diſcourſe run the more light and eaſie, I ſhall charge it with no more than what is directly and expreſly contain'd in the Text, which will all reſolve into this ſingle Propoſition, *that the Perfection of the Soul is her Union with God.* For the better illuſtration of which noble and divine *Theorem*, I ſhall Firſt conſider the ſeveral ways of our Union with God, and Secondly, the Perfection that reſults from each, whereby it will evidently appear, that the Perfection of the Soul is her union with God.

And

And First, *Of the Union of the Soul with God.* This is either Natural or Moral; First, There is a *Natural* Union between God and the Soul, as indeed there is between God and every thing else. For if God has an infinite *Essence*, he must have also an infinite *Presence*; he must be essentially every where, and if he be essentially present in all *Places*, then he must also be essentially present with all *Creatures*, consequently with the *Soul* of Man, which must therefore be supposed to be so intimately and immediately united to him, as to have its very Being and Subsistence in him, according to that of the Apostle, *In him we live, move, and have our Being.*

God it seems is the *Foundation* as well as the *efficient cause* of our Existence; and the Soul has her Being *in* God, as well as *from* him. As God penetrates and pervades *her*, so she dwells and subsists in *God*, who is the Place of Spirits, as Space is of Bodies. Now this must needs infer the most inward and immediate Union that can possibly be between Two Natures: To be more nearly united,

united, would be to be the same. If God be essentially present with the Soul, and the Soul has her Being in God, then is it not a necessary consequence that there is an immediate union between God and the Soul? The Apostle thought it so, who proves the very same Conclusion, by the very same Argument. *He is not far*, says he, *from every one of us, for in him we Live, Move, and have our Being.* He is not far from us, signifies as much, as that he is very near us, and that we are most intimately united to him. But how does the Apostle prove this our Union with God? Why because *in him we Live, Move, and have our Being.* 'Tis from hence that he infers our nearness to him, or our Union with him. We Live in him, therefore he is not far from us, but most immediately united with us: For he cannot be nearer to us, than for us to Live, Move and have our Being in *him.* Acts 17. 27, 28.

'Tis observable, that the Apostle does not say *by him*, but *in him*, to intimate the immediateness, the inwardness of his Essential Presence and Union

Union with the Soul; and that this *in him*, must not be understood of the meer Power and Efficacious Influence of God (as some will have it;) but of the very Essence and Substance of the Divine Nature, is plain from the consequence drawn from it, which otherwise would be none at all. For it would be no proof of the *nearness* of God to us, to say that we live in him, meaning by *in him*, only his Power and efficacious influence in Preserving us in being. Such an Argument as this would hardly have passed with the Learned *Athenians*. Besides that, had this been the Apostle's meaning, it would have been much better expressed, by saying, *by him*, than *in him*. Which Expression therefore both considering its proper natural Emphasis, and the conclusion which it is brought in to prove, can be supposed to intend no less than the *Essential* and *Substantial* Presence of God, and that we live, move and have our Being in him, not only as the *efficient cause*, but as the inward *Basis* and *Foundation* of our Life, Motion and Being, sustaining and supporting us, as *Space* is supposed to do the Bodies that

that exiſt in it: We are in God, as Bodies are in Space. God penetrates our Being, and contains us, and we dwell in him; he is our *Place*, that which contains us, that which ſupports us, and pervades every part of us; according to another very remarkable Expreſſion of the ſame Apoſtle concerning God, that *he is above all, and through all, and in us all.* Eph. 4. 6. Than which nothing could have been ſaid more Expreſſive of God's Eſſential Preſence to us, and of that intimate immediate Union we have with him. So then God penetrates our Eſſence, and we dwell in his, even as Space penetrates Bodies, and Bodies dwell in Space. And what Union can be imagin'd more cloſe, more intimate than this? Or how can we be more nearly united to God, than for God to penetrate us, and for us to dwell and be contained in him! The Union which we have with Bodies, or which Bodies have with each other, is nothing to this ſtrict Union which the Soul has with God, who indeed is more intimately united with his Creatures, than they are or can be with one another.

This

This is the *Natural* Union of the Soul with God; and thus all his Creatures are united to him, as well as the Soul of Man. Bodies are thus united to him, as well as Spirits, and bad Spirits as well as good ones; Devils as well as Angels, and the Damn'd as well as the Bleſſed. Nor is there any *inequality* as to this Union, which indeed is ſo cloſe that it cannot be cloſer. The brighteſt Angel of Light is not thus more intimately united to God, than the blackeſt Spirit of Darkneſs; for God can but penetrate the Subſtance of an Angel, and ſo he does that of an Evil Spirit; and an Angel can but have his Being and Dwelling in God, and ſo muſt alſo an Evil Spirit be ſuppoſed to have. As *Space* is equally united to all manner of *Bodies*, ſo *God* is equally united to all manner of *Spirits*. The vileſt piece of Dirt, and the brighteſt Jewel or Star are equally penetrated by Space, and equally contained in it; and conſequently equally united to it. And the ſame we muſt conceive of the pureſt and impureſt Spirits, with relation to God, who equally penetrates and contains them

them all, and conſequently is equally united to them all.

The Sum of this matter is, All Spirits that exiſt, are eſſentially united to God, (for 'tis by this that they do exiſt, and ſhould they be entirely diſunited from him, they would ceaſe to be,) and this Eſſential Union between God and them, is more intimate and immediate than any Union they can poſſibly have with Bodies, or with one another: And being ſo cloſe and intimate as it is, it cannot but be equal in relation to them all. For this natural Union of Spirits with God being founded upon his *Eſſential Omnipreſence*, whereby he thoroughly penetrates, and intirely contains their whole ſubſtance, it is plain that it cannot admit of more or leſs, but muſt be ſuppoſed equal in reſpect to all Spirits, yea, all Creatures that have any Being, which they cannot have but in God, with whom they are therefore equally united. This Natural Union with God therefore, tho a great Benefit, Honour and Perfection, is yet no peculiar *Priviledge* of the Soul of Man, ſince all other Creatures

Creatures partake of it with her; her own *Body* being thus as much united to God as herself. But there is another Union with God, whereof Bodies are not at all capable, and which even Spirits partake of more or less, which brings me to consider,

Secondly, The Moral Union between God and the Soul. That Natural Tye which fastens us to God so close, that it cannot be strain'd closer. But tho we cannot strain the *same* Knot any *harder*, yet we may bind our selves faster to God by *another Cord*, by adding to our Natural a Moral Union. Now as the other is an Union of our *Natures*, so this is an Union of our *Wills*, and is no other than the *Love* of God. Whatever we love, we unite our selves to, and the more we love, the more are we so United. Were it possible for a Man to love nothing out of himself, he would not be in union with any thing, but perfectly loose and free, separate and independent. But since every Man is too defective *within*, to love nothing *without*, there is no Man but what is bound and chain'd fast to some-

ſomething or other: He that loves the World, is united to the World; he that loves Mony, is united to his Mony; and he that loves God, is united to God; and he that loves God moſt, is united to him moſt. *He that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God,* ſays St. *John*; that is, is nearly united to him, and in a more eſpecial manner made one with him: For we all *neceſſarily* dwell in God, as having our being in him. This is that Natural Union which we have with God, and which all other Creatures have as well as we. That *Dwelling in God* therefore which St. *John* here ſpeaks of, and which he makes to be the proper conſequence and effect of the Love of God, muſt be underſtood of a more eſpecial and extraordinary Union, a Union of Will and Affection, the ſame with this our *Moral* Union of the Soul with God. Joh. 4. 16.

This Union of the Soul with God, will indeed never be compleat in this World; where, as we *know* but in part, ſo we *love* but in part, and ſo are but partially *united* to God. For we are at preſent united to *Crea-*

*tures* as well as to God, and 'tis the unhappineſs of moſt of us, to be more united to the former than to the latter. And indeed the Union we have with the Creatures is ſo ſtrong, and faſtened with ſo many Knots, that nothing can diſſolve it, but what diſſolves us at the ſame time. Nothing but what ſeparates Soul from Body, will untye this Knot, nothing but *Death* is ſtronger than this *Love*. Spiritual Death or Mortification will indeed go a great way towards it, and we know a certain Perſon who by this Method arrived ſo far, as to be able to ſay, *the World is Crucified unto me, and I unto the World.* But this is a rare inſtance, and muſt be underſtood too in a qualified Senſe; for as long as we are in the Body, we ſhall in ſome meaſure depend upon what has relation to the Body, and the World will ſtill claim ſome ſort of Kin and Alliance with us; and we ſhall never be able intirely to ſhake it off, as long as we keep our *Mortality* on.

But this Union will not laſt always, Death that *Univerſal Menſtruum* will diſſolve

diſſolve it; the ſame fatal Stroak that cuts the Knot of Life, will cut off that Band too which ties us to the World, ſet us abſolutely looſe and free, and intirely diſingage us from all the Creatures. And then if at that Moment we have any true Love to God, it will perfectly unite us to him; for being quite empty of the Creatures, and having no further Dependance upon them, or Inclination to them, we ſhall then love God intirely with our whole Heart, Soul and Mind; and as our *Love* will be made Perfect, ſo will our *Union* too: We ſhall then be ſo united to God, as to have Union with nothing but him, and with him, ſo ſtrictly, as not to be capable of ever being ſeparated from him.

In the mean time, this Moral Union of the Soul with God, may arrive to a great degree in this Life, tho it cannot be abſolutely perfect and compleat but in the other. And as 'tis here attainable in great meaſure, ſo 'tis abſolutely *neceſſary* in *ſome*. There is indeed a great Latitude in this Union, which admits of as many

degrees, as our Love to God does, in respect of which, one Soul may be more nearly united to God than another, and the same Soul may be more nearly united to God at one time than another. But notwithstanding this indefinite variety of *increase* and *decrease* in this our Union with God, there is a degree of it that is fix'd and immoveable, and below which it can never fall; even this *Moral* Union with God, is *necessary* in some degree, as well as the *Natural*; and tho all Spirits are not equally united to God in respect of this Moral Union, as they are in respect of the Natural, yet they all are in some Measure or other, and will always be.

For as there is no Spirit but what was made for the Love of God, so there is no Spirit but what does actually love him, and adhere to him in some degree or other; even the Souls of the Damn'd, and the Devil himself, do in some measure love God, and are accordingly in some measure united to him. To love God more or less is *free*, but absolutely to love him, is *necessary* and unavoidable; every intelligent

telligent Creature does ſo, and muſt do ſo, at leaſt *implicitly* and *confuſely*, if not explicitly and diſtinctly. For every Spirit, even thoſe who are in an actual ſtate of Damnation, muſt love *Happineſs*, (otherwiſe they would not be capable of being what we ſuppoſe them, that is, *Miſerable*;) and all Happineſs being in the truth and reality of the thing, the very ſame with the enjoyment of God, 'tis plain, that in loving Happineſs, they have ſome *general glance* at God, and that he is at leaſt the implicit and confuſe Object of their Love.

'Tis moſt certain that every Creature that has Underſtanding and Will, was made for the Knowledge and for the Love of God, and know him and love him they muſt in ſome meaſure or other; for God cannot wholly fail of his end. They indeed may fail of theirs, in not contemplating and loving God to thoſe degrees that they ought as reaſonable Beings, and which are neceſſary to make them *Happy*; but there is an abſolute neceſſity of their knowing and loving him in ſome degree or other, other-

wise those their Powers of Understanding and Will would wholly miss the end for which they were made, and so would be in vain, and serve for nothing, which is absurd to suppose.

But besides, is it possible that God should have any Love for that Spirit that has none for him? And if God should utterly cease to love him, could that Spirit any longer exist? Can that thing exist, which God does not at all love? Can any thing be without the Will of God? But Spirits do exist, and always shall, as being immortal. And may we not hence conclude, that God does in some measure love them, and consequently that they also do in some measure love God? since otherwise they would neither be loved by him, nor *be* at all. For there is no being out of the *Love*, any more than there is out of the *Essential Presence* of God.

Should any Spirit utterly cease to love God, he must needs in that very instant cease to be: For there is nothing lovely in the Will of that Creature,

ture, which is wholly averſe from God; conſequently God cannot love that Will, conſequently that Will can no longer exiſt, (unleſs we can ſuppoſe any thing to exiſt, whoſe Exiſtence God does not will,) and conſequently there muſt be an end alſo of that Spirit, unleſs we can ſuppoſe a Rational Nature to exiſt without a Will, and that loves nothing; which alſo upon another account will be the reſult of this ſuppoſition. For that Spirit (could we ſuppoſe ſuch a one,) that does not at all love God, muſt not love at all, or muſt love *nothing*; for if he loves any thing, it muſt be *Happineſs*, and if he loves that, he does at leaſt confuſely and implicitly love God, as I remark'd before. So then every way it is abſolutely neceſſary, that all Spirits ſhould in ſome degree or other love God; and this *Moral* Union of the Soul with her Creator, is no more perfectly and intirely to be broken off or diſſolv'd, than the *Natural*.

And thus far of this Two-fold Union that is between the Soul and God. I proceed now to conſider the

Perfection that accrues to the Soul from each.

The whole Perfection of the Soul, is either internal or external, from within or from without; either that Perfection which she has in her self, from the Essentials of her Nature and Constitution, or that which she derives from her Union with some other Being. Now that Perfection which she has in her self, is so inconsiderable, if compared with her Natural Inclinations, (as was remark'd in the beginning,) that she is forced to go out of her self, and to joyn her self to some other Being more perfect than her self. That Being to which we are all naturally united, is God; and he is also the Being to which we are all Morally united in some measure. And 'tis in our power to strengthen and confirm this Union by free and voluntary applications, and to make it more and more close and intire, till at last it be perfect and consummate, as I have discoursed already. But now since our natural and inward Perfection turns to so little an account, let us see what that Perfection

fection is, which accrues to the Soul from without, which ſhe gains by her Union with God. And Firſt as to the Perfections that reſult from her Natural Union, among which I conſider,

Firſt, *Her Natural Being or Exiſtence.* This is the Firſt general Perfection that accrues to the Soul from her Union with God; as ſhe exiſts from him, and in him, ſo does ſhe alſo exiſt by him, or by her Union with him; for God is the inmoſt Support and Foundation, as well as Cauſe of all his Works; the whole Creation reſts upon him as upon a Center, and he bears and ſuſtains all things by his *Eſſence*, as he produces all things by his *Will*. As all things that are, are united to God, ſo 'tis by this their Union with him, that all things are; and tho it be not neceſſary that whatever is united to God, ſhould continue to exiſt, (for then it would not be in the Power of God to annihilate any thing,) yet 'tis eſſential to every thing that exiſts, to be united to God, and nothing can be intirely ſeparated from him, without ceaſing to be. The only

only total Separation from God, whereof a Creature is capable, is *Annihilation*.

For should a Creature exist, and not exist in God, pray what would be the Foundation of that his Existence? Or would he want none? That we cannot say, for if he want none, then a Creature will be able to subsist in and by it self; and if it can bear such a *Solitude* as this, it must be from such a Perfection of his Nature as involves Independency in being, which cannot be, but in a Being who is so perfect as to have Existence essential to his Nature; (for only a Necessary Being can be an independent Being:) Which perfection if we once grant a Creature, we shall leave nothing that will distinguish him from his God. We cannot therefore say, that a Creature needs no Foundation for his Existence, or that he can exist in *nothing*; he must therefore exist in something. But if that something be still a Creature, there is nothing gain'd; for that Creature being supposed not to be *self-subsistent*, will still need some further Foundation.

He

He muſt therefore have God for the Foundation of his Exiſtence, and ſtay his Being upon the *Rock of Ages*. He muſt ſubſiſt by his Union with him, who ſubſiſts in and by himſelf, whoſe Eſſential Preſence is the great neceſſary Preſervative of whatever he has made, and who (as the Scripture tells us) *upholds all things by the Word of his Power*. Heb. 1. 3.

Secondly, *Intellectual Light*. This is another Perfection that redounds to the Soul, from her Union with God; for God is Light, and he that dwelleth in God, dwelleth in Light: God is Truth, and he that is united to God, is alſo united to Truth. And how can an intelligent Being dwell in Light, without being inlightned, or be united to Truth without being inſtructed? God has in himſelf the Ideas of all things, that is, ſome ſuch Perfections *in himſelf*, as anſwer to, and repreſent all the degrees of Being that are *out of himſelf*. This would be eaſily demonſtrable, (could I ſtand to do it) from the general Nature of God, who as being infinitely Perfect, muſt needs be ſuppoſed to include within

within his Eſſence, after an intelligible manner, all degrees of Reality, the whole poſſibility of Being. But beſides, how elſe could God make the World, how could he *Create*, unleſs he be ſuppoſed to have in himſelf the Ideas of all things? For tho the World was made out of *nothing*, yet it muſt be made according to *ſomething*; and where could that ſomething be, but in God? when as yet there was not any thing exiſting but God. The *Natural* exiſtence of things is founded upon their *Ideal* exiſtence; and if things had not firſt exiſted in *Idea*, they could never have exiſted in *Nature*; unleſs you will ſuppoſe God to have acted blindfold, and in the dark, without thinking of what he made, or conſidering how or for what he made it. If God made all things with Counſel and Deſign, if his Wiſdom was then aſſiſting to his Power, (as who dare ſay it was not, eſpecially ſince *Wiſdom* her ſelf ſays, that ſhe was preſent at the making of the World,) 'tis moſt certain that he muſt have the Ideas of all things in himſelf, and that he made all things according to thoſe eternal Ideas. For there

Prov. 8.

there can be no deſign without Thinking, and there can be no Thinking without Ideas, without an immediate Object of Thought, which could be no other than the Eſſence of God himſelf, as being ſuppoſed antecedent to the exiſtence of all Creatures, which could then have no Being but in the Divine Mind. If therefore God made all things with Counſel and Deſign, he muſt have the Ideas of all things in himſelf; but if you will ſay that God did not make what he has made with Counſel and Deſign, beſides the impiety and abſurdity of the Suppoſition, I know not what advantage it is to the Creation to have had a *God* for its Author, ſince blind Chance or unaccountable Fate would have done as well. Beſides, had not God an Eternal foreknowledge of all his Creatures? But how or in what could he eternally foreknow them, but in himſelf, and by his own eternal Ideas? For God could not foreknow them as they *were not*, but as they *were*. If then God foreknew them from all Eternity, 'tis certain that they *were* from all Eternity. But they were not thus

in

in *Nature*, therefore they were thus in their Ideas only, and conſequently 'twas not in their *Natural*, but in their *Ideal* Entities, that they were the Objects of God's Eternal Foreknowledge. God foreknew them from Eternity, as they were from Eternity, that is, not in themſelves, but in his own Eternal Ideas. And ſo alſo he muſt be ſuppoſed to know them now, not in themſelves as they are out of him, but in his own Ideas, unleſs you will ſuppoſe God to know his Works now ſince the Creation after another manner, than he did from all Eternity; unleſs you will ſuppoſe a *Change* in the Divine Knowledge, and ſuch as is for the *worſe* too, it being an infinitely leſs perfect way of Knowledge for God to know Creatures in *themſelves*, than to know them in *himſelf*, and by his own Ideas. Upon theſe and ſeveral other grounds which (were it not for running in too far into the Heart of Speculation,) I could eaſily aſſign, it is a Propoſition of unqueſtionable certainty, that God has in himſelf the Ideas of all things, and that he ſees all things in thoſe Ideas, and ſo is his own Light.

But

But now what a *Perfection* must it be for a Soul to be united to such a Being as this! To a Being that is all things, and contains all things! To him who possesses all the Eternal Reasons and Essences of things, with all their fix'd and immutable Habitudes and Relations, who is Essential Light, and Substantial Truth! Can a Soul united to such a Being want Light? Or can she doubt whether she has her Light from him? Whence else *should* she have it? Whence else can she have it? or whence else *need* she have it? For if God has in himself the Ideas of all things, and if the Soul be united to this *Omniform* Essence of God, 'tis plain that there is nothing wanting to the *Possible*, nay, (in some degree) to the *necessary* illumination of the Soul; who being united to God, must also consequently be united to the Divine Ideas, which therefore not only *may*, but in some measure *must* be the *immediate Object* of her Mind; which is all that I know of that is requisite to Intellectual Illumination. 'Tis therefore by our Union with God and his Eternal Truth, that we become Rational and

and Underſtanding Creatures, who if he either were not, or were never ſo little ſeparate from us, we ſhould fall immediately into an intellectual Stupor and ſilence of Spirit, and ſhould not be able to think one Thought, or ſo much as to be Conſcious of our very Being. For God is the true Light of all Spirits, and were this Light never ſo little eclips'd, an Intellectual Darkneſs would preſently ſeize upon all Minds, and the Brighteſt Intelligences would be ſtruck Blind. That they are not ſo now, is purely owing to that Union they have with the Eternal Light and Truth, which becomes the immediate Object of their Minds, their Intelligible Light, their Idea. And thus 'tis alſo with the Soul of Man, who partaking of the ſame *Union*, partakes alſo of the ſame Intellectual *Light*. As God ſees all things in himſelf, ſo ſhe ſees all things in God; and 'tis by her Eſſential *Union* with him that ſhe does ſo.

Thirdly, *The whole Pleaſure and Comfort of our Being*. This is another and the moſt moving and ingaging of thoſe Perfections which the Soul derives

derives from her Union with God. Pleaſure is a Perfection of the Soul, and when the Soul ſhall be moſt perfect, (as in the other ſtate,) ſhe ſhall then be in the moſt Pleaſure. And as her greater degree of Pleaſure will then proceed from the greater degree of her Union with God, ſo 'tis very reaſonable to conclude that ſhe has now ſome degrees of the ſame Perfection, from ſome degree of Union with the ſame Principle. God (as I have proved at large in another Diſcourſe,) is the only true efficient cauſe of all our *Senſations*, and conſequently of all our *Pleaſure*; and 'tis by that Eſſential Union he has with us, that he Communicates this Perfection to us. Did not God act in and upon our Spirit, by putting it into different Modifications, it is impoſſible that we ſhould have any pleaſing Senſations; and were not the Soul eſſentially united to God, 'tis impoſſible that he ſhould any way act upon it. For there is no ſuch thing as *Action at a diſtance*, properly ſpeaking either in the Operations of the Creature, or in the Operations of God. The Power of God is not of a further Extent

than his Presence, (and it need not, since his Presence is Infinite.) Nor is God any where *Efficaciously*, but where he is *Substantially*; there is no such thing as a mere *Influential* Presence of God: If God were not Essentially united to the Material World, he could not communicate any *Motion* to it; and if he were not as Essentially united to the Intellectual World, the World of Spirits, he could not communicate to them either *Light* or *Pleasure*. For if God acts, he acts by his Will, and his Will is himself; and consequently he can act no where, but where he is. 'Tis therefore our Essential Union with God, which makes us capable of his acting upon our Souls, and whereby we come to have all those Sentiments of Pleasure and Joy wherewith they are at any time affected.

But besides those particular Sensations of Pleasure which are occasionally and upon some certain impressions excited in us, we cannot but find a certain general Sentiment of Pleasure that accompanies our *Being*, and which does not come and go, off

and

and on, as our other Senſations do, but remains fixed and permanent, and maintains one conſtant and uninterrupted ſteddineſs. Tho we have no particular occaſion of Joy, or incitement of Pleaſure from any thing without, from any of thoſe ſenſible Objects which ſurround us; tho all things about us are ſilent, and our own Thoughts too are no way ingaged upon any Object extraordinary, yet we feel a certain Pleaſure in our very *Exiſtence*, not in our being thus or thus, in this or that ſtate of Mind or Body, (for I abſtract at preſent from any particular Senſation,) but abſolutely and ſimply in our *Being*, in our being Conſcious to our Selves that we *are*. This general Pleaſure of *meer Being*, (for ſo I think it may be fitly call'd.) every Man may much better *Experiment* than I can *deſcribe*; and I believe there is no Man that has convers'd intimately with himſelf, but who is ſufficiently ſenſible of the thing I would expreſs.

Now this Pleaſure accompanying our Being as ſuch, it will be neceſſary to ſuppoſe it inſeparable from all in-

telligent Beings while they exiſt, even thoſe who are moſt *unhappy*, who though they may have it ſo outweighed and overſet with Miſery, that they were better be without it, than pay ſo dearly for it; (for I cannot be of a Mind with thoſe who will have it better to *be*, tho in extream Miſery, than *not* to *be*;) yet have it they muſt, as long as their Being laſts, tho it be ſo drown'd and overwhelm'd in a contrary Sentiment, that they cannot enjoy the Sweetneſs of it. But now whence ſhould this general pleaſure of meer Being, ariſe in theſe Miſerable Beings? Not ſure from any poſitive and direct act of God, as our particular Senſations do; for it cannot be ſuppoſed that God by any expreſs Will or Act of his, would reward thoſe wretched Spirits with pleaſing Senſations, who deſerve his ſevereſt Anger, and whom he is then *Puniſhing* for their Demerits. It muſt be then reſolved into that Eſſential Union, that even ſuch Spirits have, (for otherwiſe they could not be) with the infinite and all-being God, who is ſo excellent an Eſſence, ſo Sovereign a Good, that there

there is no Being united to him, without being ſomething the better for him, without partaking of ſome degree of Pleaſure. So then we owe the whole Pleaſure and Comfort of our Being to our Union with God, were it not for which, we ſhould have neither *Light* nor *Warmth*; Darkneſs and Deſolation, Privation and Sterility would be our Portion; we ſhould feel nothing, nor know nothing, nor ſo much as *Be*.

And thus far of the Perfection that redounds to the Soul from her *Natural* Union with God; I ſhall now briefly conſider that which proceeds from her *Moral* Union with the ſame Principle. Here I might ſhew, that the Love of God, (for that is what we underſtand here by this Moral Union,) is the trueſt Key of Knowledge; according to that Sublime Aphoriſm of a Great Man, *Amor Dei eſt Lux Animæ*; that it brightens the Underſtanding, as well as warms the Affections; Clears the Head, as well as inlarges the Heart, and gives to the Soul an open and a free view of the greateſt and nobleſt Truths, both

in Nature and in Religion. That it is the beſt Teacher and Inſtructor in *Theory*, and the beſt Guide and Director in *Practice*, the beſt Expoſitor of Scripture, the beſt Reſolver of Doubts, the beſt Diſtinguiſher of the Will of God, the beſt Decider of Caſes of Conſcience, and the beſt Moderator and Compoſer of Diſputes and Controverſies in Religion; and in one Word, that as the *Fear of God is the beginning*, ſo the *Love* of God is the *Perfection* and Accompliſhment of *Wiſdom*. But this being matter of Experience more than of Notion, I ſhall rather apply my ſelf to conſider how the Love of God perfects the *Will* of Man, which is the proper Seat of it.

As the Love of God has an *Effective* Influence towards the Perfecting of the Underſtanding, ſo is it the immediate and *formal* Perfection of the Will. For it is the Perfection of every Power or Faculty, to be imploy'd about its proper Object, and in proſecution of its proper End. Now God is the only proper Object and End of the Will, not only becauſe he is (as I have elſewhere ſhewn,) our only true

true Good, as being the Cauſe of all our Pleaſure and Happineſs; but alſo becauſe the Will of Man was made for the Love of God, and for him only. 'Twill I ſuppoſe be readily granted me, that the Will was made to *Love*, as much as the Eye was made to *See*, or the Ear to *Hear*, this being the whole uſe and purpoſe to which it is fitted to Serve. But to Love *what*? Was it made to Love it ſelf? But how can a finite Being be its own End? Or was it made to love any of its Fellow-Creatures? But ſtay, if the Will be made to love a Creature, then the ſame Creature that is the End of this Will, muſt be alſo the End of God too, who is ſuppoſed to make it for that End. But now can a Creature be the end of God? Can God deſire or aim at any thing out of himſelf? Or, can God act for any thing out of himſelf? How then is he a Being infinite in Perfection, and every way Self ſufficient? But ſuppoſe it were poſſible for God to have any End or Aim, to deſire or propoſe any thing out of himſelf, yet why or to what purpoſe ſhould he do it? For is not God infinitely Wiſe?

and must he not then love that which is most Lovely? and must he not therefore love himself more than all other things whatever, and so make himself the end of all his Actions, and consequently of his whole Creation? All things then are made *for* God, as well as *by* him, and he is the End of all his Works. If therefore the Will of Man was *made*, it was made for *God*; and if it was made to *Love*, it was made to love *God*. And indeed there is no other way of conceiving how the Will should be made for God, than by being made for the Love of God, who can no otherwise be its End, than as he is its *Object*. I conclude therefore that God is the proper End and Object of the Will, which was made only for God, and the Love of God, and is then consequently in her greatest Perfection when imployed in the Love of him that made her, and for whom she was made. The Love of God is the greatest Moral Perfection of the Soul, puts her in a right frame and posture, and entertains her with the Divinest Joy and Pleasure, sets her above the Tyranny of *Concupiscence*, and

and all her other troubleſom Paſſions, raiſes her beyond the mean Joys, and unreaſonable Griefs of Life, and is the beſt Antidote againſt the Terrors of Death, conforms her Will to the Will of God, and is a ſtay to her in all the Revolutions of his Providence, exalts her above the inſipid Entertainments of the World, and helps to ſupport her under the Senſe of its Emptineſs and Vanity; in one Word, makes her fit to reliſh her Union with God here, and diſpoſes her for a ſtricter and more *Beatifick* Union with him hereafter.

And thus have I conſider'd that double Union which the Soul has with God, *Natural* and *Moral*, and thoſe reſpective Perfections which reſult from them, and which ſhe enjoys by Vertue of them, whereby the Truth of that great and ſublime Theorem we laid down may be in ſome meaſure illuſtrated, *viz.* that *the Perfection of the Soul is her Union with God.* Here is the *Fons boni Lucidus*, the bright and ever-ſhining Fountain of Good; the Well of Life, the Spring of Joy, the Water of Comfort,

Comfort, and the River of Pleasure, and Happy is the Soul that shall bathe her self in it: The deeper she wades in these Living Waters, the higher the Tide of her Happiness rises; for here is her whole Perfection Natural and Moral, all that she enjoys and all that she is ever capable of.

But if the whole Perfection of the Soul be in her Union with God, if it all resolves into this Point, what is it then to be *separated* from him? And what must the condition of those Wretched Spirits be, who have no more Union with God than what is just enough to sustain them in Being, and make them capable of subsisting under that Privation of God, which would otherwise Annihilate them? What must be the Darkness, what the Poverty, what the Barrenness, what the Coldness, Dryness, Deadness, Emptiness, Desolation and Solitude of such a State! *Depart from me ye Cursed!* I need not add into Everlasting Fire, for here we have *Hell* enough already. What, to be thrown off from our *Center*, to be forc'd away from the Point of our Tendency

Tendency and our Reſt, to be baniſh'd from the only Good, the Joy, the Pleaſure, the Life, the Light, the Warmth, the Sun of our Souls: Eye hath not ſeen, neither hath Ear heard, nor can it enter into the Heart of Man to conceive what a ſtate of Miſery and unhappineſs this muſt be. If the Partial and ſhort Eclipſe of the Light of this great Sun made even the Lion of the Tribe of *Judah* roar out in a bitter Agony, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me*, what muſt be the Miſery, the Damnation, the Hell of that Spirit who is thoroughly and eternally *forſaken* of his God?

*It is good then for me*, may every rational Soul ſay, *to draw near unto God*; ſince my whole Perfection both Natural and Moral conſiſts in my Union with him. It is good for me, indeed the beſt thing I can do, to hold me faſt by my God, to unite my ſelf to him by as many Ties and Bands as I can, by all the Cords and Chains of Love, and by every Link of that Chain, to make this Union as cloſe and as ſtrong as is poſſible, and

ſo

ſo to draw near to him, and faſten my ſelf upon him by the moſt *Cleaving* Love that he may reward my imperfect Union here, with a Perfect and Everlaſting one hereafter. This is the true and only intereſt of every Rational Soul, tho there are but few that are ſo rational as to be duly ſenſible of it, or that conſider how advantagious, how neceſſary it is for them to draw near unto God, and to enter into a cloſe union with him. But to thoſe few who are ſenſible of the Intereſt and Neceſſity of this Union with God, and would know by what means they might be beſt aſſiſted towards the effecting it, I would adviſe,

1. *To Retire.* The Noiſe, Hurry, Buſineſs, Impertinence, Folly, Sin, Vanity and Contagion of the World, do not well comport with either the Habit or the Practice of Divine Love. The Spirit of Devotion and Divine Application cannot breathe in ſuch a
Cant. 7. 11. thick groſs Air, *Come my Beloved, let us go forth into the Field, let us lodge in the Villages*, is the Voice and Language of the Spouſe to Chriſt, and ſo it is of every

every Devout and Divinely-affected Soul. And says God to his Church, *I will lead her into the Wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her.* Hos. 2. 14. Solitude and Retirement is the proper Advantage and Opportunity of Divine Love, and of uniting our Souls with God, and of relishing and enjoying that Union: The Sense of which made a Devout Soul once break forth into this Seraphick Rapture,

*O Solitudo Mentibus*
*Orantium gratissima,*
*O vera Cordis Suavitas,*
*Ignota vulgi Sensibus,*
*Ut te requiro & expeto*
*Turbam perosus improbam!*
*Hic, hic Serena Spiritus,*
*Aspirat aura Pectori.*
*Hic nullus auditur fremens*
*Tumultuantium fragor.*
*Hic Corda nullus inquinat*
*Vapor, vel umbra Criminis.*
*Campi Sonant hic Mellicis,*
*Psallentium Concentibus.*
*Hic Angelorum Cœtibus*
*Immixtus, & vindex sui*
*Sapiens quietam transigit*
*Vitam procul negotiis,*

*Curis*

*Curis procul nocentibus,*
*Solutus omni jurgio.*
*Hic alta vitans Curiæ*
*Potentioris Limina*
*Innoxios ducit dies*
*Inanis expers Ambitûs.*
*Hic lucra Conscientiæ*
*Quadrante justo Computans*
*Studet Mereri Fletibus*
*Amissa Cæli Gaudia.*
*Optet Superba Culmina,*
*Opes, domusq. Splendidas*
*Quicunq. vult. Me Nescium*
*Fraudis juvat Silentium,*
*Me Solitudo, me Quies*
*Abscondat ignotum omnibus,*
*Deoq. soli Cognitum.*
*Hoc scire demum, hoc vivere est,*
Sibi, Deoq. *vivere.*

2. *To Contemplate.* And now thou art *retired*, thou may'st advantagiously do so, and *must* if thou wilt ever unite thy self to thy God, and kindle in thy Heart a Seraphick Flame of Devotion and Divine Love. The Will always receives its Orders from the Understanding, and we love every thing according to the view which we have of its Amiableness. If therefore

fore thou wilt raiſe in thy Soul a well-grounded and affectionate Love of God, place him before thee in a good Light, and take an advantagious view of him from the Elevations of Contemplation. Meditate upon him frequently and attentively, (for he will bear that ſevere Teſt,) and contemplate the infinite Perfection, the Sovereign Goodneſs, the Tranſcendent Excellency, the *Centrality* of his Divine Eſſence; think of his Beauty, think of his Lovelineſs, think of his Love to thee, and whilſt thou art thus *Muſing*, *the Fire will kindle.*

3. *To Mortify.* A very harſh and ungrateful, but very neceſſary Method for the Love of God and our Union with him. We muſt firſt Die to our *Selves* and to the *World*, before we can either Love God, or Live unto him. Mortify therefore both thy *Body* and thy *Soul*, but eſpecially thy Soul; purge it firſt of all *Self-Love*, which of all Diſpoſitions of Mind is moſt oppoſite to, and inconſiſtent with the Love of God. Next, empty it of the *World*, and of all Love towards *Senſible* things; unburthen it of all Covetouſneſs,

vetouſneſs, Ambition, Pride, Luſt, Envy and all manner of Carnal and Worldly Sentiments, cleanſe it, purify it, ſtrip it, ſimplify it, let nothing adhere to it that ſavours either of *Self*, or of the *World*; nothing that may by its interpoſal hinder that immediate Contact, that *Central Touch* between thee and thy God. And when once thou haſt reduced thy Soul to this *Singleneſs* and *Simplicity*, thou wilt find that the leaſt Attraction of the Divine Spirit will draw thee after it. When once one Scale of the Balance is thus emptied of the Creature, the leaſt weight of Divine Grace will weigh down the other. The more we draw off from our *ſelves* and from the *World*, the nearer we ſhall draw to God; and the cloſer we are united to him, the nearer we ſhall be to our Happineſs, and the more we ſhall be ſtill convinc'd as we draw nearer and nearer, that *the Perfection of the Soul is her Union with God.*

To whom be all Glory.

# A DISCOURSE OF *The Honour due to Good Men, and of the great Crime of treating them with Scorn and Contempt.*

2 Tim. 3. 3.

*Deſpiſers of thoſe that are good.*

NEver does an ill Man appear ſo truly *Contemptible*, as when he deſpiſes him that is Good and Vertuous; and never does the Good Man appear more truly *Honourable*, than when he can patiently and meekly indure, deſpiſe, and forgive that Contempt; which however diffi-

cult upon a Surprize, he will find both more reasonable and more easie to do, when he shall silently recollect with himself, and consider First, What an inward sufficiency and self-Contentedness there is in true Goodness, how little it *needs* that Honour and Respect which it *deserves*. Secondly, In what Credit and Estimation he is with God, and with the Saints and Angels of Light, and Wise and Good Men upon Earth, the best Judges both of Persons and things. When he shall consider Thirdly, the great and Honourable Characters and Representations which are given of him in Holy Scripture, where he is always set forth as the only Wise, Rich, Great, Powerful and Happy Man, as the only Person of true Worth and Honour. And Fourthly, The Figure that Vertue and Goodness makes in Human Writings, the best and greatest part of which are imployed in drawing fair and beautiful Ideas of it, and in recommending its Practice upon the strongest Arguments of Reason and Interest. And withal Fifthly, That these are the Result of Mens Cool, Sober and Best Thoughts, composed

posed in Solitude and Retirement, upon the deepest Consideration and Recollection, when they are best able to think, and most sincere in the delivery of their Sentiments. And that Sixthly, Though a great many have the Impudence to make Goodness the Object of their Sport and Raillery in common Talk, yet very few have ventured to give this their Folly under their Hands, and to let it stand upon publick Record; so that there are it may be above a Thousand Volumes soberly and judiciously written in the Honour and Vindication of Vertue, to one *Libel* that dares appear against it. When he shall moreover consider Seventhly, the Secret Approbations and Applauses of his own Conscience continually clearing him of the Contempt that is cast upon him, and commending him for his Patience under it. Eighthly, The inward Veneration that Goodness often extorts from many of those who are the greatest Strangers to it, and seem at the greatest defiance with it. Ninthly, The Confessions of the most Extravagant that occasionally drop from them in their more sober intervals,

when kept from Wine and Company, they have been suffered to come a little to themselves, and have had a little leisure to Reflect. And Tenthly, The more permanent and standing Declarations of Returning Sinners, the solemn Retractations of Repentance, which upon the Review and with the advantage of *Second Thought*, determines on the side of Goodness and Vertue. When he shall consider Eleventhly, That the brightest Examples of Vertue have ever been most undervalued, and met with the greatest Despite. That Twelfthly, This is one of those *Persecutions* which those that will live Godly in Christ Jesus must suffer. That Thirteenthly, The Best of Men have suffered it: And Fourteenthly, That even our Blessed Lord himself was thus treated, among whose Prophetick Characters this is one of the Chief,
Isa. 53. 3. *He is despised and rejected of Men.* When he shall yet further consider Fifteenthly, That the Judgements and Opinions of Men make no real alteration either in the value of things, or in the condition of Persons; and consequently the little or no hurt that

Contempt

Contempt does to any Body, beſides him that Entertains it. And Sixteenthly, The *Glory* that Vertue caſts about the Head of thoſe who ſuffer this little *Martyrdom* for her ſake here; and Seventeenthly, The *Crown* that ſhe is preparing and refining for them hereafter.

Upon theſe Conſiderations a Good Man may eaſily raiſe himſelf ſo far above all that Contempt which his Goodneſs expoſes him to, as not only to bear and forgive, but even *deſpiſe* it. But if theſe are too many to be preſently recollected, or attended to at once, and if he would be more compendiouſly aſſiſted, let him but conſider from what Quiver this Arrow comes, who it is that treats him with Contempt: That 'tis a *Fools Bolt*, which indeed is *quickly ſhot*, but blindfold and at random, without much aim or force, with a dark Eye, and with an unſteddy Hand, and accordingly with little Execution. That 'tis in ſhort an Ill Man that deſpiſes him, (for with the Good he is in better Repute,) one whoſe Judgment is of no Authority, whoſe Repreſenta-

tions of things are always otherwise than their Natures, and whose Good Word is the truest Defamation. One that is utterly Blind and Ignorant, as not being illuminated by the *true Light*, that lives and walks in Darkness, that understands neither God nor himself, nor his Fellow-Creatures, that has all over false Ideas of Greatness and Goodness, of Honour and Dishonour, of Shame and Glory, whose Notions and Characters of things are cross and transposed, that calls Evil Good, and Good Evil, that puts Darkness for Light, and Light for Darkness, Bitter for Sweet, and Sweet for Bitter, that confounds every thing, and understands nothing as he ought, the most *Mistaken* Creature in the World. This is the true Character of Wicked Men, that which the Scripture gives of them, that which their whole Conduct Justifies and Confirms, and that which they themselves own and take upon them, some of them in this World, as often as they are so happy as to *Repent*, and all of them in the other World, where they shall recant and transpose their former Sentences, and with regret say, *We Fools thought his*

*his Life Madneſs.* Error is the true Original Cauſe of all the Sin and Miſery that is in the World, and 'tis nothing but Ignorance and Miſtake that makes Wicked Men will and act amiſs. They are in the dark, and have not a clear view either of their *End* or of their *Way*; and 'tis that which makes them ſo often ſtumble and wander. They chuſe and Practiſe ill, becauſe at that inſtant it ſeems good to them, (for Evil as ſuch is not Eligible) and therefore it ſeems good to them, becauſe they are *Deceived.* They do not ſufficiently attend to the Nature, Moment, Relations and Conſequences of things; they do not view them in a good Light, nor it may be with good Eyes, which being imbued with the Colours of Luſt and Prejudice, derive the like Tincture upon the Object; they have not their Thoughts and Conſiderations about them, nor do they ſee to the end of their Actions: And hence 'tis that they paſs falſe Judgments, and take ill Meaſures; that their whole Life (like an ill-compoſed Diſcourſe,) runs all along upon wrong Principles and miſtaken

ſtaken Reaſonings, and is all over Fallacy and *Paralogiſm*; that they are nothing but Error, Darkneſs and Confuſion; whereof they give ſufficient Demonſtration in all their Diſcourſes and in all their Actions, but none ſo plain and convincing, as when they ridicule and vilifie thoſe Perſons who deſerve the greateſt Honour and Reverence, when they deride and blaſpheme the brighteſt Image, the Divineſt Appearance of God in Man, and are *Deſpiſers of thoſe that are good.*

The Words are the worſt part of an ill Character of a bad ſort of Men that ſhould riſe up in the Church, or rather againſt it in the latter Ages of the World, when through the Degeneracy of Human Nature, Chriſtian Piety ſhould not only ſuffer a great *Decay*, and be at a low Ebb, but even fall under downright Contempt, and its Profeſſors with it; when Goodneſs ſhould not only grow out of faſhion, but into ſhame; when Religion ſhould be diſcountenanc'd and laugh'd off the Stage; and when the Impudent Harden'd Tranſgreſſor not

content

content to walk in the *Counſel* of the Ungodly, or to ſtand in the *Way* of Sinners, ſhould advance to the higheſt pitch of Impiety, to the very Ridge of Develiſm, and take the *Chair* of the Scornful, making his Mocks at God and Religion, and throwing that Contempt upon Goodneſs and Good Men which is due only to himſelf, and his own Wickedneſs and Folly.

Whether we are not now entring upon the Line of this Cloudy Interval of theſe latter and more degenerate days, whether the preſent Age be not concern'd in this black Character, I ſhall leave to be conſider'd by thoſe who ſhall obſerve that prophane Humour and Irreligious Genius that appears ſo viſible in it, and ſeems to make up its very Ayr and Complexion; while in the mean time I chuſe rather to proceed to the Conſideration of the Words before me, which making the Contempt of Good Men one of the Marks of a Wicked and Profligate Age, do thereby imply, that Good Men do not deſerve the Contempt of Wicked Men, but rather their greateſt Honour and Eſteem:

Esteem: That nevertheless 'tis their Lot sometimes to fall under it, and that the Age is most abominably Wicked and Corrupt when they do so. So that we have here Three things to consider,

1. That Honour and Reverence which is due to Good Men.
2. That Contempt which they do really meet with.
3. The heinous injustice and impiety of all such Contempt.

1. We are to consider *that Honour and Reverence which is due to good Men.* Whereof that we may take a just Account, it will be necessary to lay open the true Ground and Foundation of Honour in general, which when duly stated and placed upon a right bottom, will be a Measure to direct us in our Judgment of that Honour which belongs to Good Men, to inform us whether they are truly Honourable or no, and to what degree they are so. Now I suppose that God is the only true Fountain and Original of all Honour, according to that acknowledgment we are taught to make

make to him in our daily Prayers, *Thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory*; and that Confession of the Elders in the *Revelations*, who are brought in casting their Crowns down before the Throne, and saying, *Worthy art thou O Lord to receive Glory, Honour, and Power.* By which Expression joyn'd to that Devotional and Reverential act of theirs, in casting their Crowns before the Throne, they plainly acknowledge God to be the only true Fountain and Original of all Honour, and that it was from this great Sun of the Intellectual World that they receiv'd every Ray of their Celestial Light and Glory. And therefore it was that they cast their Crowns before the Throne; the very same Homage that every inferior Magistrate or Major of a City pays to the King, in delivering up to him his Scepter or Mace (the Insign of his Honour,) when he passes through the Corporation. And by this the King is acknowledg'd to be the only Fountain of all Civil Honour and Power, that is, the only visible one, the highest Fountain of it that rises upon Earth. But this is only in a Secondary Sense, and Rev. 4.11.

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in a Subordinate and Derivative way. For this Fountain has alſo its Fountain, and muſt be traced up to a higher Original, even to him by *whom Kings reign, and Princes decree Juſtice.*

But now if God be the true Fountain of all Honour, (which I ſuppoſe is a Principle that will readily find admittance, wherever the Notion of God does,) it will then follow that *Creatures* are no further Honourable, than as they partake of his Excellency and Perfection; no further than as in ſome meaſure they repreſent God; even as an inferior Magiſtrate is no further honourable in a civil reſpect, than as he partakes of the Power, and repreſents the Perſon of the King. That therefore which ſtamps any Perſon with a Character of Dignity, and makes him truly honourable, muſt be ſome real Excellence or other either Inhering or Adhering, either Moral, Intellectual or Political, whereby he reſembles God, or ſome Perfection of the Divine Nature. Thus thoſe who are in Power or Authority, are Honourable, as repreſent-

repreſenting and partaking of the Sovereign Regality of God; thoſe that have great Intellectual Indowments, that are Knowing and Learned, are ſo far Honourable, as repreſenting the Wiſdom of God; and ſo alſo thoſe that are Good, (as we ſhall further ſee by and by,) are Honourable, as reſembling and repreſenting the Goodneſs of God, the excellent and immutable Order and Regularity of the Divine Will. So much of God as appears in any Man, or in any Creature, ſo much as he has of what is *Divine*, ſo far he is truly Honourable, ſo far he is honour'd by God, and ſo far he ought to be honoured and reſpected by his Fellow-Creatures. And the greater that Perfection is whereby any Perſon reſembles God, and the more he has of it, the greater will the Honour be which thence redounds to him, becauſe he is thereby ſuppoſed to reſemble God ſo much the more. And upon this Account, we ſhall find it further neceſſary to conclude, that the more this Excellency or Perfection is our own, the more Right and Property we have in it, the more its acquiſition depends upon the

the use of our *Free Will*, still the more honourable will it render the Possessors of it, and the greater respect will be due to them, because therein they do yet more resemble God, as representing not only this or that of his particular Perfections, but also in some sort that general one of his *Aseity* or *Independency*.

These are the true Grounds of all that Honour which is Natural and Real, which is founded in Reason and Sense, and does not depend upon the arbitrary Humours and unaccountable Fancies of Unprincipl'd Men. It all resolves into some resemblance of God, some Participation of the Divine Nature, some Excellence or Perfection that carries a Representation of the Supream Good, some Image or Appearance of God in Man. That Person who has any thing of this, (as all Men have in some degree or other,) is so far honourable; and he that has most of it, in whom the Glory of the Divinity does most brightly shine, in whom there is the greatest Appearance of God, he it is that is most Honourable. Whereupon

*Jesus*

*Jesus Christ* being (as the Author to the *Hebrews* tells us,) the *Brightness* of his Fathers *Glory*, and the *Express Image* of his *Person*, comes to have a right to the Greatest and most Superlative Honour, and that even in respect of his Human Nature, which upon the account of its intimate Union with, and more Plentiful Participation of the Divine, is become more Honourable than the most Glorious Creatures. So that even the *Man* Christ Jesus is really more honourable than the most Exalted Seraphim, *being* (as the same Apostle tells us,) *made so much better than the Angels, as he has by inheritance obtain'd a more excellent Name than they.* Heb. 1. 3. Ver. 4.

The grounds of Honour thus briefly open'd, we have in the same view a Discovery of that particular Right which the Good Man has to it; for 'tis very certain and undeniable, that the foregoing Measures are truly and highly applicable to him; that he has such Excellencies and Perfections of Mind, as resemble and express those of the Divine Nature; that he is in his Proportion (as the Son of God is in

in his,) ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης, an *Effulgency*, an *Eradiation* of God's Glory, and χαρακτὴρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως, a *Character*, an *Impression* of his Substance, a Living Idea and Representation of the most Perfect Being, and that there is a very great and Eminent Appearance of God in him; which must needs give him a more than ordinary Title to Honour and Respect.

'Tis true indeed there is something of this in every Man, as being made in the Image, and after the Likeness of God; upon which account it is, that a Measure of Honour is due to every Man, according to that injunction of the Apostle, *Honour all Men.* There is it seems a certain Reverence due to Human Nature, and Man as Man is Honourable, and consequently every Man may justly challenge a part in our Respect and Esteem. For let a Man be otherwise never so vile and unworthy in himself, his Nature will always be good and excellent, which he will never be able so to debauch or dishonour, but that it will still bear the Image and Superscription of God, (however blotted and stain'd;)

1 Pet. 2. 17.

ſtain'd ,) and as long as it does ſo, ſome degrees of Reverence will be due to it.

But this Image of God which is Legible in every Man, is bright and ſhining in him that is Good; like a Picture that not only retains ſo much of the Fundamental Draught, as to diſcover whom it was intended for, but whoſe Features are diſtinct and plain, the Proportion juſt, the Colours freſh, and the whole Ayr approaching to *Life*. The Divine Likeneſs does more eminently appear and ſhine forth with a more ſtrong and perpendicular Ray in a Good Man, who reſembles and repreſents God, not only as to the Eſſentials of his Nature, but the Order and Rectitude of it, partaking with him not only in the Spirituality of his Eſſence, but in that which renders him more Divine, Lovely and Adorable, the *Morality* of his *Will*. This is the brighteſt ſide of the Divine Image, and here it is that a Good Man does more particularly reſemble God, as being *renew'd in the Spirit of his Mind, and having put on the New Man, which after God is Created* Eph. 4. 23.

*in Righteousness and true Holiness.* So that he is doubly Partaker of the Divine Nature, and carries a Two-fold Representation of his Creator, personates him in his *Moral* as well as *Natural* Character, and has therefore an Accumulative Title to our Reverence and Esteem, and is worthy of *Double Honour.*

Goodness is indeed the best *Patent* for Honour; and there is no Man who upon a serious and rational Estimation of things, will appear so truly Honourable as the Good Man, and that whether we respect

First, The greatness of the Perfection he is possess'd of; or

Secondly, His Right and Property in it.

First, If we respect *the greatness of the Perfection he is possessed of.* He resembles God in his best and greatest Perfection, that for which God seems most to value himself, and that for which we most admire and adore God, that is, his *Goodness.* Neither the Spirituality, nor the Immensity, nor

nor the Wiſdom, nor the Power, nor all the Attributes of God put together, repreſent him either ſo lovely or ſo gloriouſly as this ſingle one of his Goodneſs, as the Moral part of his Nature. This is his Grandeur and his Glory, and that which he moſt glories in, and is concern'd to vindicate. *I will make all my Goodneſs paſs before thee*, ſays he to *Moſes* when he deſired a view of his Glory, implying that his Goodneſs was really his greateſt Glory. And we do not find God any where concern'd to juſtifie his Wiſdom or his Power, but we find him making a Solemn Appeal to the Sons of Men concerning his Goodneſs and the Morality of his Conduct, *Hear now*, ſays he, *O Houſe of* Iſrael, *is not my Way equal*? He ſeems ſo jealous of the Equity of his Proceedings, and ſo tender (as it were) of his Reputation in this Point, as to be concern'd to convince Men of it; and one main end of the Day of Judgment, is to give the World publick Satisfaction of this, which is therefore call'd *the Day of the Revelation of the Righteous Judgment of God.* Now this being that Perfection of

Exod. 33. 19.

Ezek. 18. 25.

Rom 2. 5.

God which is of greatest Excellence, and that wherein the good Man particularly resembles him, the *Court of Honour* must not take it amiss, if upon this account we conclude the Good Man more truly honourable than any of those who upon the Score of their Birth, Quality, Fortune, or any other Pretence assume that Title. All the other Sons of Honour represent some lower Perfections of God, as the Man of Knowledge and Learning represents the Wisdom of God, the Man of Quality his Greatness, the Man of Strength his Power, and the Man of Authority his Regality; but the Good Man represents the Morality of his Nature, his Goodness and Righteousness which is the Flower of his Perfections, that which brings most Honour and Glory to himself, and consequently to the Man who in this part resembles him.

This I know runs very cross to the common Measures of the World, where to be reckon'd a Man of Parts and Learning, is thought more honourable than to have the Character of Goodness and Integrity; and accordingly,

cordingly when we hear the Name of a *Worthy* Man given to any one, there preſently riſes in our Minds an Idea of great Parts or Learning, as if that were at leaſt the greateſt, if not the only Worth; and upon the ſame Principle the Name of Fool is worſe reſented than that of Knave; and that which only *queſtions* our Senſe or Capacity, is thought more to reflect upon our Honour, than that which even *reproaches* our Honeſty. But all this is carried out by meer Confidence and Aſſurance, by Number and Vote, without Reaſon or Principle; for there is more of God in the Man that is Good and Vertuous, than in him that is Knowing and Learned; and therefore alſo a greater Right and Title to Honour. Not but that even in reſpect of real Senſe and Underſtanding, the Good Man might ſtand upon a level with him, ſince by the wiſe Government of himſelf, and diſcreet Conduct of his Life, he gives the beſt demonſtration of *Intellectual Light*, according to that of St. *James*, *Who is a Wiſe Man, and indued with Knowledge among you, let him ſhew it out of a good Converſation.*

*versation.* But to wave this Consideration at present, it may suffice to give our Good Man the Preference of Honour in his Competition with the Learned, Great, Powerful or any other; that he resembles and represents God according to a more noble Perfection than any of them do. And thus is he more honourable in respect of the greatness of the Perfection he is possessed of. As also

Secondly, *In respect of his Right and Property in it.* The more there is of this in any good or perfection a Man has, the more Honour will redound to him from it; because (as was remark'd above,) he thereby comes to have a nearer Resemblance of God in respect of his *Independence.* Now if there be any Perfection which a Man has a Right and Property in, and may call his *own*, it is his Goodness and Vertue, as resulting from the free determination of his Will, the only thing either without him, or within him that he has in his Power. 'Tis true indeed a Mans Vertue is not so his own, as to exclude the *Grace* of God, to whose concurrence and co-

operation

operation all our good Habits and Performances muſt be principally aſcribed; but yet 'tis moſt certain, that 'tis in ſeveral reſpects much more his own, than any of thoſe other things upon which Men generally value themſelves, and expect to be reverenc'd and eſteem'd by others. The Goods of Fortune are wholly without a Man, and the Goods of the Body are in the worſer part of him; and the Goods of the Mind though inherent in him, and in the better part of him too, yet they are none of them ſo much of and from himſelf, ſo much in his own Power and Diſpoſal as his Goodneſs and Vertue. Men are born to Greatneſs, and they inherit Nobility; and a good Temper of the Blood and Spirits, with a happy Contexture of the Brain, makes them Witty and Ingenious; but they are Vertuous by *Choice*, and Goodneſs is of their own acquiring, and depends all the way upon the free determination of their own Wills. In which reſpect Good Men have a new and peculiar Title to Honour, in as much as they repreſent not only a greater Perfection of God, *viz.* his

*Goodneſs*, but in a more perfect and excellent Manner, ſuch as in ſome Meaſure expreſſes the *Independency* of the Divine Nature.

Indeed upon the whole matter, a good Man is the greateſt *Repreſentative* of God upon Earth; he repreſents the beſt and greateſt of his Perfections, and after the moſt Divine way and manner. He is poſſeſſed of the greateſt Good, and he has it in ſome Meaſure from *Himſelf*, and may truly call it his own, it being partly owing to the good uſe he has made of his Natural Powers. His Body is a Living Temple of the Holy Ghoſt, and his Soul a reaſoning Image of the whole Trinity; and both together make up a Bleſſed Member of Chriſt,
Eph 2.22. and an *Habitation of God through the Spirit*. For God properly dwells in a Good Man, and a Good Man has alſo his Dwelling in God; according to that of St. *John*, *He that dwelleth in Charity, dwelleth in God, and God in him.* He is indeed the moſt Glorious Temple that the Divinity has next to the Sacred Humanity of Jeſus Chriſt; the Divine *Shecinah* reſts upon him, and

and the Glory of God ſhines forth in him, as it did of old in the Jewiſh *Tabernacle*. And as God dwells in him, ſo he loves him, and delights in him, and in him only. For 'tis neither Greatneſs nor Wealth, Wit nor Learning, nor any thing of meer Human Extraction, that can recommend us to God, or make us amiable or honourable in his Eyes. Theſe things indeed are all in all with the World, but they are of no account with him; God regards nothing in us but his own Image, which conſiſts in Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs, and this he can find no where upon Earth, but in a Good Man; and there he finds it, loves it, and honours it. For the good Man follows the Will, and conforms to the Order of God, the frame of his Mind is rightly diſpoſed, and the Strings of his Soul well in Tune; that which is the Meaſure of the Divine Will, is the Rule alſo of his Eſſential Order and Juſtice, he wills that which is ſimply and abſolutely beſt, without being ſway'd by any by, private or ſelf-regards; is above all little ſneaking Deſigns or unworthy Projectings; is indued

dued with a Spirit of Univerſal Love, *ſeeks* the good of all *Mankind*, and heartily *rejoyces* in the Welfare of *every* Creature. Men may talk of Gallantry, Bravery and Honour, and ſuch like Romantick Worthineſs, but when all's done, Goodneſs is the moſt generous and noble thing in the World; and could we but ſee into the Breaſt of him that has it, we ſhould need no further Argument to recommend him to our Eſteem; the very Idea of his Excellence, (like that of *Vertue* it ſelf,) would extort from us the greateſt Veneration for him: Thus it would be if the inſide of a Good Man were laid open, *Si his Oculis*, &c. But as the caſe now ſtands, 'tis eaſier to demonſtrate that eminent Right which good Men have to Honour, than to perſuade a ſtupid and diſingenious World, that is influenc'd only by ſenſible Appearances, to treat them with that Reverence and Reſpect which they juſtly deſerve: Which leads me to conſider

2. *That Contempt which they do really meet with.* Deſpiſed and Rejected of Men, which was one of the moſt diſtinguiſhing

ſtinguiſhing Characters of the Son of God, is and always will be in ſome meaſure the Lot and Portion of all his Diſciples and Followers, who muſt bear and carry after their Maſter this part of his Croſs, whatever other Portion of it they have the Forune to eſcape. The World was never yet ſo good, (and I'm afraid never will be on this ſide the *Millennium*,) but that Wicked Men had always by much the Majority on their ſide; and they are eaſily tempted to deſpiſe thoſe whom they can ſo eaſily *out-vote*, and whom they are withal reſolv'd never to *imitate*. They are all ingaged in an oppoſite Party, and have eſpouſed a contrary cauſe, and ſo are obliged in their own Juſtification, to deſpiſe them to whoſe Order they will not be brought over, and as far as they can to render them Contemptible. The Principle upon which they act, makes it their Intereſt ſo to do, and they of all Men are the moſt conſiſtent with their Principles: Whence 'tis that the Children of this World are in their Generation Wiſer than the Children of Light. So that upon grounds of common Probability, a

Good

Good Man can hardly expect any other Treatment from the Hands of Ill Men than Scorn and Contempt: And accordingly 'tis what he generally meets with. But this being matter of Fact, can be directly proved by no other Argument than Obſervation and Experience, which truly is ſo well furniſhed with inſtances of this nature, that there needs no other. For certainly that Man muſt either have been a great Stranger to the World, or have been very happy in the fortune of his Company, who ſhall need to be told of the Contempt and Diſ-reſpect (not to ſay any thing of groſſer Abuſes and Indignities) that the Good Man meets with abroad as his ordinary Entertainment. That his Awful Senſe of God is reproached as Cowardice; that his Piety and Devotion towards him, goes for Softneſs; that his Conſcientious Strictneſs, is term'd Preciſeneſs; that his Honeſty and Sincerity is from want of Parts, and becauſe he underſtands not Men; that his Temperance is Unſociableneſs; his Quietneſs and Inoffenſiveneſs, Lowneſs of Spirit; his Gravity, Pride and Moroſeneſs of Humour:

Humour: In a Word, that all his good Qualities are Miſconſtrued and Nick-named, and the Good Man himſelf all over Vilified and Ridiculed.

The truth is, *He* and *Religion* are the Two Subjects in *Reſerve* for Drollery and Divertiſement to moſt lewd Companies, the laſt Refuge of exhauſted Humour, and of a ſpent Invention; when their Fancy flags, and the Vein of their Wit and Mirth runs low, when their Sleepy Spirits want a *Provocative*, and the Glaſs and their Jollity are both at a ſtand, then at a dead lift comes in Religion, or ſome Good Man or other, (and if one of the Sacred Character, ſo much the better,) to quicken their drooping Mirth, and to ſet a new edge upon their Wit; and then their Imagination teems and ferments afreſh, and the Men are *awake* and *alive* again. Theſe things are ſo notorious and unqueſtionable, that they need more to be lamented and reform'd than to be proved; and therefore I ſhall beſtow upon this part only this further Remark, that there is one thing that

that mightily argues both the Reality and the Greatneſs of that Contempt which is uſually caſt upon Good Men, as being the deplorable Effect and Conſequence of it, and that is, (who would ever imagin it?) *the ſhame of doing well.* Strange I confeſs it is, that Men ſhould be aſhamed of that which is the greateſt Perfection of their Beings, and the true Glory of their Natures; and yet ſo it falls out, there is many a Man who has an excellent Temper of Spirit, very Pious Reliſhes of God, and whoſe Heart ſtands very well diſpoſed to Religion; nay, he is very full of it, and would fain give it vent, and unburthen himſelf of it in good and pious Diſcourſe, but he is aſhamed, but he dares not, for fear of appearing Singular and out of Faſhion, Odd and Ridiculous, of being thought *Guilty* of Devotion; and therefore (as one that was under the like Paſſion confeſſes of himſelf,) *he holds his Tongue and ſpeaks nothing; he keeps Silence, yea, even from good Words*; tho at the ſame time it be *Pain* and *Grief* to him. Now tho this is not at all to be excuſed in Good Men, who by this

this their Shamefaceneſs and Backwardneſs to own and acknowledge their Character and Profeſſion, do too much Honour and Countenance to the Cenſures of Ill Men; yet this is a plain Argument of the truth of what we are now diſcourſing, a convincing ſign of that general Scorn and Contempt which the profeſſion and appearance of Goodneſs expoſes Men to, as being the unhappy conſequence of that Contempt. For why is it that Good Men are aſhamed to expreſs that *outwardly*, which *inwardly* they ſo much admire and approve, and to appear as Religious as indeed they are, but becauſe of that Ignominy and Contempt which ordinarily inſues upon ſuch an Appearance? as a Man would be aſhamed to go Abroad in an Old-faſhion'd Habit, though never ſo Rich and Good, and to his own liking, for fear of being ſtared upon, and laugh'd at. And this truly is the hard caſe of Good Men; the World is grown ſo corrupt, and Goodneſs has ſo few Friends in it, that Good Men are fain to hide and conceal the rich Attire and precious Furniture of their Minds, and to wear

wear a *Disguise* over it, for fear if they should appear in their own Native Dress, they should draw upon them the Eyes and the Laughter of the Rabble, who would take them for *Fools* and *Anticks*. By what Resonings and Considerations, our Good Man may be assisted to despise and overlook this absurd and unworthy Treatment, has been already suggested in the entrance of this Discourse; it will be time now to consider

3. *The heinous Injustice and Impiety of all such Contempt.* The grounds of this are sufficiently laid already in what we have discours'd upon the First Head, concerning that Honour and Reverence which is due to Good Men. For if Good Men are really so honourable and worthy of respect, as is there represented, then it must needs follow, that 'tis a very great piece of Injustice and Impiety to despise them. It is so indeed to despise any Man, for all Men are in some measure honourable, as far as they represent him, who is the Fountain of all Honour, and no Man absolutely

to

to be deſpiſed; and therefore ſays *Solomon*, *He that is void of Wiſdom, deſpiſes his Neighbour.* Whatever therefore the Witty Men of the Age may think, 'tis no great ſign of Wiſdom in the Judgment of him who was ſo great a Maſter of it, to deſpiſe any Man. But to deſpiſe a Good Man, one that of all Men has the beſt and moſt unqueſtionable Right and Title to *Honour*, is the moſt unprincipled piece of Folly, the groſſeſt Injuſtice, the moſt Colourleſs and Pretenceleſs Impiety imaginable. There is nothing in the whole Univerſe truly contemptible but an Ill Man, nor he any further than as he declines from that great and fundamental meaſure of Honour, the Image and Reſemblance of God; and ſo far indeed there is no one degree of Contempt but what is juſtly due to him. If therefore Wicked Men are for deſpiſing, if they muſt needs exerciſe their Scorn and Contempt, let it be upon *themſelves*, the only deſpicable part of the Creation. But to deſpiſe Good Men, thoſe who are worthy of the greateſt Honour and Reverence, thoſe whom God himſelf moſt honours, Prov. 11. 12.

and in whom is the greateſt Appearance of his Divinity, thoſe who repreſent him in his beſt and nobleſt Perfections, who are Partakers of his Divine Nature, Members of his Son, Temples of his Spirit, and Heirs of his Eternal Kingdom; what an Injuſtice, what an Impiety muſt this be! God has but one particular Repreſentative upon Earth, ſince the Aſſumption of his Son, and ſhall that be ſingled out by Wicked and Diſſolute Men to be the ſubject of their Deriſion and Contempt?

1 Chron. 15. 29. The Scripture takes notice of it as a very irreligious Symptom in *Michal*, that ſhe deſpiſed *David* in her Heart, when ſhe ſaw him by way of Feſtival Solemnity, Dancing and Playing before the Ark of God; and if in this ſhe is ſuppoſed to have betrayed great Levity and Prophaneneſs of Spirit, much more would ſhe have done ſo, if ſhe had deſpiſed him, when he was ingaged in an immediate act of Religion, when he was upon his Knees at Prayers, and tuning his Harp and Himſelf to a Devotional Hymn or Halleluiah. 'Tis great Prophaneneſs to

deſpiſe

deſpiſe any thing that never ſo remotely relates to God, and carries in any degree the face of Religion; (upon which account by the way, I think it a very unjuſtifiable Practice to ridicule or make a Mockery of what the moſt miſtaken Sect of Men calls *Divine Worſhip*;) but to make light of that wherein the Honour of God is more immediately concern'd, to undervalue pure and undefiled Religion, to mock at Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs, to ridicule that glorious *Image* and *Life* of God upon Earth, which the Angels adore in Heaven; what Impiety can be compared with this? It muſt be a great Affront to the Infinite Majeſty of God, to deſpiſe any part of the *Natural Creation*, (there being nothing in it but what is form'd according to the Living Exemplars of the Eternal and uncreated Wiſdom, who is the *Idea* of all the Creatures) but to deſpiſe the Supernatural Product of his Spirit, the Workmanſhip of his Grace, the moſt Divine Image of his Son; what an Indignity muſt this be to him! what an Abominable, I had almoſt ſaid *Unpardonable* Offence a-

gainſt him! How nearly is his Majeſty and Honour concern'd in it! and how ſeverely do we think will he ſit in Judgment againſt it in the great Day of Diſtinction and Recompence, when he ſhall be glorified in his Saints, and upon his Enemies, particularly thoſe his bold and impudent Adverſaries, who are *Deſpiſers of them that are good*!

*Behold* then *ye Deſpiſers, and wonder and periſh* in that great and laſt Day of Deciſion, when Religion and Piety ſhall be publickly honoured and rewarded, and the Righteous ſhall ſtand in great Boldneſs before the Face of ſuch as have afflicted him, and made no account of him or his Labours. And when the Wicked repenting and groaning for Anguiſh of Spirit, ſhall ſay within themſelves, this was he whom we had ſometimes in Deriſion, and a Proverb of Reproach: We Fools accounted his Life Madneſs, and his End to be without Honour. But how is he number'd among the Children of God, and his Lot is among the Saints! The Scene is now ſtrangely alter'd, and the ſtate

ſtate of things revers'd and turned upſide down. Vertue that was before deſpiſed, is now the only thing in Credit and Honour, and that dares lift up its Head; and Vice that was before applauded, flatter'd and courted and feared, now ſneaks and trembles, and inherits Eternal Shame and Confuſion. Conſider this, ye that forget God, and deſpiſe his Worſhip, and thoſe that ſerve him, and that are ſo dear to him, and turn your Contempt into Honour and Eſteem; for how meanly ſoever you may think of Good Men, God in the mean while has another notion of them; and know this, that you cannot think ſo meanly of them, as God thinks of you, and as you will one Day think of your ſelves. In the mean time conſider what your Judge ſays, *Take heed that ye deſpiſe not one of theſe little ones; for I ſay unto you, that in Heaven their Angels do always behold the Face of my Father which is in Heaven.* Mat. 18. 10.

The Reſult then of the whole is this, that we endeavour to judge of things, not according to Popular Meaſures, but according to true and juſt

Ideas, and render to Good Men that Honour and Reverence which is due to that glorious Image of God which ſhines in them, and have a care of treating any Man with Scorn and Contempt, leſt it ſhould happen to light upon a Good Man; but moſt of all how we deſpiſe them whom we know to be Good: Whom we ought to Love, Reverence and Eſteem, and for whom we ought to Praiſe and Glorify God, to whom be Glory henceforth and for ever. *Amen.*

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# A DISCOURSE OF *The ſeveral Ways whereby God addreſſes himſelf to Man.*

Prov. 8. 1, 4, 5.

*Doth not wiſdom cry? and underſtanding put forth her voice?*
*Unto you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the ſons of men.*
*O ye ſimple, underſtand wiſdom, and ye fools, be ye of an underſtanding heart.*

WHEN a Man ſhall ſeriouſly conſider and compare the vaſtly different States of the two

Worlds, the *Natural* and the *Moral*, how regular and full of Order the Natural is, where the Laws of Motion are not more excellent and perfect than the Execution of them is punctual and exact; where Bodies of all manner of Sizes, Figures and Contextures move not only regularly and orderly, ſo as to contribute to the Beauty and Perfection of the Univerſe, but alſo with the greateſt Uniformity and Agreement imaginable, the Communication of Motion being always the ſame in the like Accidents and Rencounters of Bodies all the World over; I ſay, when a Man ſhall conſider this, and at the ſame time ſhall reflect upon the State of the *Moral* World, how all over irregular and diſorderly this is, how corrupt the Wills and Practices of Men are, how little the ſacred Rules of Morality are obſerv'd, which yet are as neceſſary to the well being of Society, as the Laws of Motion are to the Order of Nature. And withal how various and diſuniform this irregular Motion of human Will is, every Man almoſt ſetting up for himſelf, and directing his Courſe a ſeveral

ral way, acting upon a different Principle, and for a different End, ſo that there ſeems to be ſcarce any other Agreement in their Motions but the *common Diſorder* of them; ſuch a Conſideration as this would almoſt tempt one to think, that either theſe two Worlds had not one and the ſame Author, or at leaſt that he was a very partial and unequal Parent, that he ſet a greater Value upon the Natural than upon the Moral World, and had more regard for the Orderly Motion of *Bodies*, than for the Regular Love of *Spirits*.

Thus indeed a Man would be tempted to imagin, that ſhould only conſider the different States of theſe two Worlds in themſelves, without proceeding to enquire into God's Diſpenſations towards them, and how far he has intereſs'd himſelf in the Conduct and Regulation of their reſpective Motions. But by that time this is well lookt into and conſider'd, there will appear ſufficient reaſon for the laying down that Prejudice which upon the other Conſideration he took up, ſufficient to con-

convince him that God is not ſuch a partial and unequal Parent as at firſt he was apt to imagin, but that he is no leſs concern'd for the Order of the *Moral* World, than for that of the *Natural*, and has taken as much care (as far as the Capacity of the Subject would allow) for the Regulation of the former, as for that of the latter. That he has applied himſelf to both in a Meaſure proportionable to their Natures, and has been aſſiſtant to them as far as they were capable; That he has made all Proviſion imaginable both for the Diſcovery of his Will, and for enforcing Conformity to it, and that there has been nothing wanting on God's part towards the moſt perfect Regulation of the Moral World, notwithſtanding that great and general Diſorder it is now under. For, *Does not Wiſdom cry? And Underſtanding put forth her Voice? Unto you, O Men, I call, my Voice is to the Sons of Men. O ye Simple, underſtand Wiſdom, and ye Fools be of an underſtanding Heart.*

The

The Words are already divided, and ſtand in a poſture fit for Diſcourſe; for in the firſt Verſe we have a ſolemn Declaration or Admonition of the Divine λόγος, the Eternal and Subſtantial Wiſdom of God. *Doth not Wiſdom cry? And Underſtanding put forth her Voice?* In the ſecond we have the Perſons to whom this Admonition is directed: *Unto you, O Men, I call, my Voice is to the Sons of Men.* In the third Verſe we have the Matter of this ſolemn Admonition: *O ye Simple, underſtand Wiſdom, and ye Fools, be ye of an underſtanding Heart.* Theſe are the Parts into which the Words are naturally laid out; but not loving to clog my Diſcourſe with unneceſſary Diviſions, I ſhall caſt the two firſt into one, and ſo ſhall conſider

1. An Admonition or Addreſs of the Eternal Wiſdom to the World, or to Mankind.

2. The Matter of this Addreſs.

3. The great Concern that lies upon the World to attend to and comply with this Divine Addreſs.

The

The firſt thing we have here to conſider is, an Admonition or Addreſs of the Eternal Wiſdom to the World. I ſay of the *Eternal Wiſdom*, for that no other can be meant by (Wiſdom) in this place, than the ſubſtantial and eſſential Wiſdom of God, the Divine λόγος, the ſecond Perſon of the Trinity, who is the true intelligible World, and in whom is both the *Life* and the *Light* of all Spirits, muſt needs appear ſo unqueſtionably evident to any one that ſhall but glance over the Coherence of this Chapter, that I may well be allow'd to take it for granted, and proceed upon it as a *Suppoſition*. This eternal and uncreated Wiſdom who is the great Luminary of the whole Intellectual World, the Wiſdom of his Father, and the Light of Men, by whom, as the Author to the *Hebrews* tells us, God made the Worlds, and by whom he upholds and ſuſtains all things. This ſame Eternal Wiſdom I ſay being in proceſs of time to be made Fleſh, and to take upon him human Nature, has all along upon the proſpect as it were of that near Alliance he was to contract with us, ſhewn a particular

particular regard for the Children of Men, and applied himſelf to them in a various manner for their Diſciplin and Inſtruction throughout the ſeveral Ages of the World. And indeed who ſo proper for this Office, as he was in the Eternal *Syſtem* of the Divine Counſel to be the Repairer and Reſtorer of Human Nature, the Reconciler and Mediator between God and Man, and the great Teacher and Prophet of the World, and who withal was to be the King and Head of the Church, and the Judg of Men and Angels, in whoſe Hands the whole Adminiſtration of Providence is lodged, and by whom God now *governs* as at firſt he *made* all things. Who ſo fit to admoniſh and inform the World as he by whom it was firſt made, and afterwards repair'd, and upon whoſe Shoulders (as the Prophet tells us) the Government of it is to reſt. Iſa. 9. 6.

For 'tis to be conſider'd, that this Addreſs of Wiſdom to the World is one Inſtance or Part of *Divine Providence*, of that paternal Care and Concern which God has for the Works

Works of his Hands; which is seen partly in prescribing Laws of Motion to the material World, and in executing those Laws; partly in ordering and disposing the Events of the Moral World, in governing and controuling the Wills, Counsels, and Actions of Men, in setting Bounds to their Wickedness, saying, *Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further*, in bringing Good out of Evil, and the like: And partly in giving Laws and Rules of Action for the Conduct and Regulation of human Life, and in admonishing and stirring up the Hearts and Wills of Men to a due Conformity with those Laws. In speaking and making application to the rational World, both by telling Men what is their Duty, and by admonishing them to do it; by pointing out to them the Path of Life and Happiness, and by quickening and putting them forward to walk in it. These two last are the principal and most excellent Parts of Divine Providence, it being a thing of more difficulty to govern a *Rational* than a *Material* World, and withal of greater Consequence that it should be govern'd.

And

And the last of all is the most principal of the latter two, it being of greater Consequence yet, that the Rational World should be govern'd as to its *Actions* as relate to a future State, upon which an Eternity depends, than as to its *Events* and Occurrences which concern only the present Political State of things. And accordingly the Eternal Wisdom of God, by whom the World is govern'd, and the great Wheel of Providence turn'd round, has all along, and does still make this his particular Concern, to address his Voice to the Sons of Men, to teach and direct, to admonish and exhort them in the ways of Righteousness and Peace, that so they may live *well* here, and *happily* for ever.

Various are the Ways and Manners whereby God speaks and addresses himself to Man, as I shall endeavour to represent in the process of this Discourse; but in the mean time we may here pause a while and reflect how different the Method is which God uses towards the *Rational*, from that which he uses towards the *Material*

*Material* World. In the Material World God has not only fix'd and preſcrib'd certain Laws of Motion, according to which the Courſe of Nature ſhall proceed, but is himſelf the ſole and immediate Executor of thoſe Laws. For Matter being a dead thoughtleſs thing, that has not *Power* ſo much as to move it ſelf, much leſs to move it ſelf regularly and in a way of Order, nor Capacity to underſtand or take notice of any external Rules or Laws of Motion that ſhould be preſcrib'd to it, it would not have been ſufficient for God to have eſtabliſht Laws of Motion, though never ſo perfect, unleſs he had alſo undertaken the Execution of thoſe Laws which he has ſet himſelf in the Government of Nature. I ſay *ſet himſelf*; for to ſpeak properly, God does not preſcribe Laws of Motion to *Matter* (for to what purpoſe ſhould he give a Law to that which cannot underſtand any) but to *himſelf* in the Government of Matter. 'Tis to himſelf that he has ſet theſe Laws, and 'tis by himſelf too that they are executed. God does here both preſcribe and execute

cute at once; for 'tis he alone that produces and regulates all the Motions of Matter, which of it ſelf is ſo far from being able to move regularly, that it cannot move at all.

Thus God deals with the World of *Bodies*, but thus he does not deal with the World of *Spirits*. He does not here himſelf execute the Laws of *Love*, as he does there himſelf execute the Laws of *Motion*. As he immediately produces, ſo he immediately regulates the Motion of Bodies; but he contents himſelf to preſcribe Laws, to make Rational Applications, to *ſpeak* to Spirits. He ſpeaks to them becauſe they are *Rational*, and can underſtand what he ſays, and he does *but* ſpeak to them becauſe they are *free*. God does not uſe any Violence towards them, or lay any Conſtraint upon them; he will be loved with a Love of Choice and with a Love of Reaſon, with a Love worthy of him, and with a Love worthy of them. For God alwaies treats with his Creatures in a way that is proportionate to their Natures, and accordingly having

denied the Power of Thinking to Bodies, he himself thinks for them, and with his own immediate Hand conducts and orders all their Motions; but having indued Spirits with Understanding and Will, made them rational and free Agents, he treats with them in a rational way, by laying down to them Laws and Precepts, and by setting before them rational Motives and Inducements to Obedience. And this is the Method he uses towards Man, to whom as a rational Creature he addresses himself in a rational way, setting before him Good and Evil, Life and Death, both his Duty and the Consequence of doing nor ot doing it. And tho, as being a Creature of a compounded Nature, the Laws of Motion are immediately and forceably executed upon one part of him, his *Body*, yet God does not thus execute the Laws of Love upon his Spiritual part; no, he deals with that after another manner, here *Wisdom cries, and Understanding puts forth her Voice*, he makes rational Applications and Addresses to this part, he *speaks* to the Soul.

This

This he does ſeveral Ways, and in ſeveral Manners, and by ſeveral Inſtruments. Man has not more Capacities and Poſſibilities of receiving the Addreſſes of God, than God has Ways of addreſſing himſelf to him. He ſpeaks to him ſleeping, and he ſpeaks to him waking; he ſpeaks to him in Company, and he ſpeaks to him in Solitude; he ſpeaks to his Senſes, and he ſpeaks to his Underſtanding; he ſpeaks to him by Commands, by Promiſes, by Threatnings, by Exhortations, by Admonitions, by Reproofs; nay (ſo low is he pleas'd to deſcend in his Treaty with us) even by Expoſtulations, and Beſeechings, *Why will ye dye?* He is ſo concern'd to ſpeed in his Addreſs, that he becomes a Supplicant to his Creature, and courts the Workmanſhip of his Hands. He ſpeaks to him *within*, and he ſpeaks to him *without*: *Within* by the Dictates of Reaſon, by the Light of inward Truth, and by the ſecret Whiſpers of his Spirit: *Without*, by the viſible Frame and Order of the Creation, wherein not only the Heavens declare the Glory of God, and

the Firmament shews his Handy-Work, but even the meanest Insect reads him a Lecture of Divinity, and preaches to him a Sermon of Adoration and Devotion. By the various Dispensations of Providence, by all the Events and Accidents that happen in the World, by his Judgments and by his Mercies, by his Smiles and by his Frowns, by Prosperity and by Adversity, by the good Examples of good Men, and by the Punishments of bad Men, by the Histories of former times, and by the present Transactions of his own, by the Relations of others, and by his own Experiences, by the ordinary Revolutions of Nature, and by the extraordinary Appearances, by the Growth of Perfection, and Decay of natural Bodies, and by the several Stages and Periods of his own, by Hunger and Thirst, by Sickness and Death, by the Bills of Mortality, and by the Pomp of Funerals, by Graves and Monuments, Epitaphs and Escutcheons, and by *the Mourners that go about the Streets*, by every Clock that he hears strike, by every Bell that he hears ring, by the good Counsels

Counſels and Admonitions of Friends, by the reading of good Books, and by the hearing of good Sermons, but chiefly by the expreſs Revelation of his Divine Will in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Teſtament: By *Moſes* and by the Prophets, by Chriſt and by his Apoſtles, by the Law and by the Goſpel.

This laſt is the moſt evident and remarkable way of God's ſpeaking and addreſſing himſelf to Mankind. Here it is that *Wiſdom* does moſt properly and emphatically *cry*, and *Underſtanding put forth her Voice.* For here the Eternal and ſubſtantial Wiſdom that is our true intelligible Light, that enlightens every Man that comes into the World in the ſecret Receſs of his Reaſon, in Condeſcention to Man who is now wholly become ſenſible and carnal, puts on Fleſh, and makes himſelf as it were a *ſenſible Light*, inſtructing us and addreſſing himſelf to us after a ſenſible manner, by Miracles, by wholſom Diſcourſes, by Parables, by familiar Similitudes and Compariſons, and by the moſt prevailing and effectual

Sermon of a bright and shining Example. And indeed the Incarnation and Revelation of the Son of God with the whole Course of his Life and Doctrin, and his mysterious Undertaking for us in that amazing and astonishing Work of our Redemption by his own Death and Passion, is such a loud Call, such an awakening Alarm, such a mighty, such a powerful, and withal such a standing Address from God to the World, that one would think it should not fail of having some very considerable Influence upon it, but should produce a great and wonderful Change in the Lives and Manners of Men. For as hereby God does most convincingly and sensibly assure us that he loves the *Man*, so he does with no less evidence ascertain us, by what he has laid upon his own Son, that he will not spare the impenitent *Sinner*; who therefore having no Benefit by the Redemption of Christ, must necessarily have the whole weight of God's Displeasure fall upon him, and receive the full stroke of his Justice, as if no Mediator had interpos'd. Only his Condition will in one respect be much

much worſe than ſo, as having neglected ſuch a dear and wonderful Capacity and Poſſibility of Salvation, and (in the Phraſe of the Author to the *Hebrews*,) trodden under Foot the Son of God, and counted the Blood of the Covenant an unholy thing, and done in deſpite to the Spirit of Grace. Which Words tho more immediately relating to Revolters and Apoſtates from the Chriſtian Faith, do yet truly concern, and are very applicable to all *impenitent Chriſtians* who neglect to cloſe with thoſe eaſie terms of Salvation which are offer'd them in the Goſpel of Chriſt. Theſe do truly tread under Foot the Son of God, and count the Blood of the Covenant an unholy thing, and do great deſpite to the Spirit of Grace. Upon which Conſideration, as we cannot but wonder that the Goſpel has no better effect, ſo we cannot but conclude that Chriſtianity will be a very ſore *Judgment* to thoſe to whom it does not prove a *Mercy*; and that of all the ſorts of Men in the World. none will have ſuch a terrible Account to make at the laſt Day, as *ill-living Chriſtians*. Heb. 10. 29.

And thus have I run through the more visible and ordinary ways whereby God addresses himself to Mankind; which because they lie more open and exposed to view, I content my self only to point out as I go along. But there are yet other very considerable ways of God's speaking and applying himself to Man, which because less observ'd and consider'd, do the more need to be spoken to, and to be more particularly insisted upon. I therefore further consider that God speaketh and addresses himself to Man

1. *By the natural and necessary Order and Connexion of things.* I do here first of all suppose (what constant experience Witnesses, and what I presume no Man will deny,) that there is a Connexion between some certain Actions, and some certain Consequences; that some Actions are attended with good Consequences, and some with bad ones, that some do tend to the Happiness, and some to the Unhappiness of Man, both as to his Private, and as to his Publick Capacity. I suppose again Secondly, that

that this Connexion is not Poſitive and Arbitrary, but Natural and Neceſſary, that it is founded upon the Nature and Conſtitution of things, upon the Syſteme of the Natural and Moral World, that is (to expreſs my ſelf more clearly,) that the World being conſtituted as it is, and the Nature and Condition of Man in it, being ſo qualify'd and Circumſtantiated as it is, it is the natural and neceſſary Reſult of ſuch a *Complex Conſtitution* of things, that ſome certain Actions ſhould make for the well-being, and ſome for the ill-being of Man. I ſuppoſe therefore that Human Actions do operate *Phyſically*, and in a way of Natural Cauſality, and that Happineſs or Miſery are the natural and proper Effects of them; and that conſidering the preſent Syſteme of things, ſome *Actions* do as naturally tend to the order or diſorder of the Moral World, as ſome *Motions* do to the order or diſorder of the Natural World. This is the great and only Bottom of Morality, and that which lays a Ground for all the *Natural* Diſtinction that is between Good and Evil, Vertue and Vice, thoſe

those Actions being called Good which are naturally productive of Good, and those Evil which are as naturally productive of Evil: By which account of Good and Evil, it is supposed both that there is such a Connexion between such Actions and such Consequences; and withal that this Connexion is Natural and Necessary, as being founded upon the Nature and Constitution of things. Now tho this be a sufficient Reason why we should do some Actions and avoid others, because of the good or bad Consequences that do naturally attend them, yet hitherto God is not supposed to *speak* to us; nor is is the Practice or Omission of these Actions supposed as yet to be bound upon us as a *Law* by any Declaration of his Will. They are indeed in themselves highly reasonable to be done or avoided, in regard of their respective Consequences, and so are very fit and apt to be made the Matter and Subject of a Law; but as yet that which is requisite to make them so is wanting, God not being as yet supposed to have made any Declaration of his Will concerning them. But one step

ſtep further will open to us a Proſpect of that too; for whereas God is the Author of the Nature and Conſtitution of things, he muſt alſo be ſuppoſed to be the Author of all that Connexion which is founded upon it, and reſults from it. If upon ſuch a Conſtitution of Nature, there ariſes a Connexion between ſuch Actions and ſuch Conſequences, then ſuppoſing God to be the Author of that *Conſtitution*, he will be alſo the Author of that *Connexion*. As, if upon ſuch a ſtringing and tuning of a *Lute*, ſuch a Motion of the Hand upon it, will be attended with Harmony; then ſuppoſing that 'tis I who have ſo ſtrung and ſet the Lute, 'tis I alſo that am the Author of that Connexion that is between ſuch Motions upon it, and the Harmonicalneſs of its ſound. I therefore ſuppoſe Thirdly, That God (as being the Author of Nature,) is alſo the Author of that Connexion that reſults from it between ſome Actions, and that Good or Evil which follows upon them; and which muſt therefore now no longer be conſider'd as meer Natural *Conſequences*, but as *Rewards* and *Puniſhments*

*nishments* annex'd to them by the Supream Law-giver, and consequently that such and such Actions be done or omitted, is now no longer a bare Practical Proposition or Rational Dictate, (as Mr. *Hobbs* will have it) but strictly and properly a *Law*, God having sufficiently declared by these Rewards and Punishments, as by a *Natural Sanction*, that 'tis his Will and Pleasure that those Actions which are attended with good Consequences, should be done, and that those which are attended with evil Consequences should be avoided. Not as if I thought (with some) that the Law had its Obligation from the *Sanction*, but that these Natural Sanctions are Signs and Declarations of the Will of God, who by them speaks to the World, as a Law-giver what he will have done, and what he will have left undone. As he does also

2. *By sensible Pleasure and Pain*: A thing which every Body feels, but few pass any serious Reflection upon; tho to him that will consider, it will presently appear, that it reads us a very profitable Lecture, and that there is

is a *Voice of God* in it. For does not God by the frequent and daily return of theſe Impreſſions, continually put us in mind of the Nature and of the Capacity of our Souls; that we are Thinking Beings, and Beings capable of Happineſs and Miſery, which becauſe we actually feel in ſeveral Degrees, and in ſeveral kinds, we may juſtly think our ſelves capable of in more, tho how far, or in what variety, it be paſt our Comprehenſion exactly to define. Indeed at preſent we are conſcious to our ſelves but of Five different kinds of pleaſing or painful Senſations (God having for the preſent thought convenient to awaken no more than what are neceſſary to the uſe and conduct of this Bodily Life,) but what *Dormant Senſes* we have within us, how many Senſations we are capable of, and to what Degree our Pleaſure or our Pain may be heighten'd, when God ſhall proceed to draw out all the Powers, open all the *Stops*, and awaken the now ſilent Capacities of the Soul, who can tell or imagin? In the mean while by thoſe which God has already awaken'd, he gives us a little Specimen of

of what further Happineſs or Miſery we are capable, and by that warns and admoniſhes us, that one of theſe Two Senſations will be our Lot hereafter; and conſequently what manner of Perſons we ought to be, in all Holy Converſation and Godlineſs, with what care and exactneſs it concerns us to demean our ſelves in this ſhort Probation, that we may not be Miſerable, but Happy in that State which is *all Happineſs* or *all Miſery*.

Had Man never felt ſuch a thing as *Pleaſure* or *Pain*, he would not only have been ignorant of the Two greateſt Capacities of his Nature, but would have had no Handle in him for God to have taken hold of him by. It would then have been to no purpoſe for God to have given him a Revelation concerning Heaven and Hell; for he could not then have any Notion of any ſuch thing, and ſo would not have believed it; or at leaſt he would have had but ſuch a Faint, Languid and Confuſe Senſe of it, as would have ſtood him in little or no ſtead towards the Order and Government of his

his Life. But now having already taſted of theſe *Two Cups*, having within himſelf this early Pledge, this Earneſt, this Anticipation of Happineſs and Miſery; he looks upon Heaven and Hell as poſſible Ideas, and ſo ſtands diſpoſed to admit of a Revelation concerning theſe Two States, whereof he has already ſome Image within himſelf, and whereof God does not fail to put him conſtantly in mind by every Pleaſure which he enjoys, and by every Pain which he ſuffers.

And whereas we do often want that Pleaſure which we naturally Love, and feel that Pain which we naturally Hate, we are hereby given to underſtand, that we are not to our ſelves the Authors of our own Senſations, (for if ſo, we ſhould never be in Pain, and never without Pleaſure,) but are altogether *Paſſive* in theſe Sentiments, and receive them from another Hand, and at anothers Pleaſure, that we are wholly ſubject to the Power and Will of ſome Superior Being, who acts in and upon our Souls, and affects us with Pleaſure and Pain, and ſo deſerves to be

be the Object of our Love and of our Fear, as having the Power to make us Happy or Miserable. And if that Superior Being be no other than God himself, (as I have plainly demonstrated in another Discourse,) then it follows that *God* speaks and addresses himself to us in every Sensation of Pleasure or Pain which he raises in us, thereby continually admonishing us in the most sensible and palpable manner of our intire Subjection to him, and utter Dependance upon him; that we are in his Hands as Clay in the Hands of the Potter, to be moulded and fashion'd as he pleases, to receive what *Modification* of Soul he shall think fit, whether of Pleasure or of Pain; that he has the most Absolute Power over us, whereby he is able to make us either Happy or Miserable, and consequently that he only ought to be Loved, and he only to be feared by us. And thus God speaks to Man by what seems most Natural to him, and is most Ordinary with him, sensible Pleasure and Pain. As he does also

3. *By*

3. *By that inward Joy and Conſolation which attends the Good, and by that inward Trouble and Uneaſineſs that attends the bad ſtate of the Soul.* The thing here ſuppoſed, is matter of common and univerſal Experience; there is no Man but who is or may be ſenſible, that when the Moral State of his Soul is out of order, when either he leads an ill courſe of Life, or when his Heart does not ſtand rightly diſpoſed to God and Goodneſs, he feels a certain inward Pain and Trouble in his Spirit, and is reſtleſs and uneaſie within himſelf, more or leſs, according to the degree of the Diſorder, and the greater or leſſer tenderneſs and ſenſibility of his Conſcience. This ſtate of Mind which every Sinner feels, the Pſalmiſt has moſt emphatically deſcribed in the account that he gives of himſelf during the Moral Indiſpoſition of his Soul. *Thine Arrows ſtick faſt in me, and thy Hand preſſes me ſore. There is no ſoundneſs in my Fleſh becauſe of thine Anger, neither is there any reſt in my Bones becauſe of my Sin. For mine Iniquities are gone over mine Head, as an heavy Burthen they are too heavy for me. My* Pſal. 38.

*Wounds ſtink and are corrupt becauſe of my Fooliſhneſs. I am troubled, I am bow'd down greatly, I go Mourning all the Day long. For my Loins are fill'd with a Loathſom Diſeaſe, and there is no Soundneſs in my Fleſh. I am feeble and ſore broken, I have roar'd by reaſon of the Diſquietneſs of my Heart.* One would be ready to think by this diſmal Deſcription, that he that made it, had then laboured under ſome ſtrange Bodily Diſeaſe, Hurt or Pain; but 'tis very certain that the Words are Metaphorical, and under the Figure of a ſore, broken and wounded Body, repreſent that Pain and Anguiſh of Spirit the Prophet was then under, and which every Soul in its Proportion feels, that is out of the way and order of God. According to that noted Saying of St. *Auſtin*, *Ita eſt, & ſic juſſiſti Domine, ut Pœna ſibi ſit omnis inordinatus Animus. So it is, and ſo thou haſt commanded O Lord, that every inordinate Mind ſhould be a Puniſhment to it ſelf.*

And ſo likewiſe on the contrary, when a Man's Soul is rightly affected, and

and in a true Moral Frame and Temper; when he has done a good Action, or ſpent a Day well in Works of Devotion or Charity, he feels an inward Joy and Complacency of Spirit, ſomething like the Pleaſure of *Health*, when the Body is well in Tune, (for indeed Holineſs is the Health of the Soul,) with a ſecret Whiſper of Applauſe and Approbation within himſelf; he finds a Chearful Day of Light and Warmth breaking in upon his Soul, and a certain Balmy Sweetneſs diſtilling upon all his Thoughts.

But now whence is this Pleaſure and this Pain that attends the good and bad ſtate of the Soul? Is it not from God? Yes it is He (as I have elſewhere ſhewn,) is the true and ſole Cauſe of all our Senſations, and is alone able to make us Happy or Miſerable. 'Tis he therefore that raiſes this Pleaſure and this Pain in us, and that thus differently Rewards or Puniſhes the Souls of Men, as they are well or ill affected towards him: 'Tis he that diffuſes this Bitterneſs through thoſe Souls

that have erred and strayed from him and his ways, thereby admonishing them that they are in an undue and unnatural state, and in a wrong way that will never lead them to himself, their true Good; and that therefore they should make haste to get out of it. And 'tis the same *He* that pours out the Oyl of Joy and Gladness upon Good and Vertuously disposed Souls, thereby admonishing them that they are in his Order, in a state and way that he likes and approves of, and that will not fail to bring them to himself, and that therefore they should go on and persevere in this Orderly Course. This I take to be both a true Account, and the Natural Construction of this Pleasure and this Pain which attends the Good or the Evil Disposition of the Soul. They are both raised in her by God, and that to no other end, but to admonish her of her Duty and Interest, that she may know when she Conforms to his Order, and when she deviates from it. And thus the great God out of his infinite Love, and tender Regard for his Creatures, is pleased to act the part of a *Guardian Angel*

*Angel General*, to do the Office of a Private Monitor to every particular Man, by Smiling upon him, and Comforting him when he does well, and by Frowning upon him, and Checking him when he does ill, that ſo he may have both a *Mark* to *diſcern*, and an *Incouragement* to *do* his Duty.

Theſe are the ſeveral ways whereby *Wiſdom cries*, and *Underſtanding puts forth her Voice*. Thus God ſpeaks and addreſſes himſelf to Man. But how does Man *Hear*? Why he turns the Deaf-Ear, and refuſes the Voice of the Divine Charmer, Charm he never ſo wiſely. He ſets at naught all his Counſels, and will have none of his Reproofs; as *Wiſdom* her ſelf complains in the Firſt Chapter of her Divine Sentences. The loud Clamour of the Senſes, the Tumult and Hurry of the Paſſions, the Noiſe and Buz of the World, and the Cares and Troubles of this Buſie Life, conſpire together to drown both the ſtill Whiſpers, and the louder Calls of God, and do ſo fill and ingage our narrow Capacities, that nothing Prov. 1. 25.

else can be distinctly heard but what relates to the good of the Body, and the Animal part of Man. But there is a time coming on, when God will be heard, and that before the Awakening Trump of the Arch-Angel, when Sickness shall have brought down the swelling Tide of the Blood and Spirits, and thereby laid the Fury and Tempest of Nature; when the Stream of Vital Oyl shall run low, and the great Wheel of Life turn gently round; when all is still and quiet in the Man, then will God speak to *Adam* in the Cool of the Day, in the Calm and Silence of his Passions, and will then be sure to be heard by him. In the mean time, if Man will not be perswaded to lend his Ear upon the account of the Greatness and Majesty of him that speaks, yet at least let him hearken and attend for the moment and importance of the thing spoken. Which naturally leads me to the next Stage of my Discourse, namely to consider

2. *The Matter of this Address from God to Man.* We have had a view of

of the ſeveral ways whereby God ſpeaks and makes continual Application to the World, and in them, of his Fatherly Care and Concern for the Happineſs and well-being of his Creatures, whom he would not thus importunately Viſit and Sollicit, were he not truly deſirous of their preſent and future Good. And that he is ſo, the *Matter* of this Divine Addreſs will ſerve to convince us, as well as the various ways and manners whereby he makes it. But what is that? What is it that God ſpeaks to Men? It muſt be ſomething worthy of him, and worthy of them; ſomething fit for a God to communicate, and ſomething fit for a World of Rational Beings to hear. When Wiſdom cries, and Underſtanding puts forth her Voice; when God comes down with a Meſſage to Men, we may juſtly expect ſome vety weighty and important Matter, ſomething anſwerable to the Quality of ſo great a Speaker, and ſomething that is of Moment and Conſequence for Men to know and be inform'd of. But what is it that he ſpeaks to them? Does he tell them

τὰ βάθη τοῦ Θεοῦ, the deep things of God? Does he open and uncover to them his own Divine Essence, or the great Mysteries of the Trinity, the Eternal Generation of the Son? or the Procession of the Holy Ghost? Does he declare to them the notion of Eternity and Infinity, or acquaint them with the Order and Hierarchy of the Angels? Does he unfold to them the Secrets of Nature, or the Intricacies of Providence? Does he inform them about the order and manner of the Divine Decrees, and of their Consistence with Human Liberty? Does he give them an account why the Christian Religion was no sooner reveal'd, or why the Law was no sooner given, or why the World it self was no sooner made? Does he tell them how the Soul now lives in the Body, or how it shall live hereafter without it, or whether it had any Being before she came into it? In one Word, does he undertake to satisfy their Curiosity about Nice and Subtile Questions, about dark Problems, and matters of high Notion and Theory, whether *Metaphysical* or *Mathematical*? One is apt to fancy and expect that he should;

and

and did God ſet the ſame value upon ſuch things that Men do, no doubt but he would. But he well knew that theſe things to the Comprehenſion of which our preſent Capacities are not very well ſuited, and which the Condition of this preſent Life does not mightily want, and which are of no great Service for the future; he knew that our Eyes were too weak to bear much Light, and our Heads too ſhallow to hold much Theory; and that a little would but ſerve to puff us up. He knew that our Faculties were too narrow to comprehend ſuch great Diſcoveries, and that an imperfect glimpſe of them would but fill us with Vanity. In ſhort, that the Knowledge of theſe things (to uſe the Words of the Pſalmiſt,) was too wonderful and excellent for us, that we cannot attain unto it, and withal that it would not ſignify much to our Happineſs, if we could. And therefore conſidering the preſent incapacity of Man for theſe things, and the little neceſſity of theſe things to Man, God has not thought fit to reveal theſe things to us, or to make them

Matter

Matter of his great Addreſs to the World.

It would have been very eaſie for the Eternal Wiſdom of God, who was at the making of the World,
Prov. 8. 27. (for *when he prepared the Heavens, I was there*, ſays ſhe,) and by whom
Heb. 1. 2. the Apoſtle tells us the Worlds were made, and who therefore could beſt unfold the Myſteries of the Creation; I ſay it would have been very eaſie, and (if ever) very ſeaſonable for this Eternal Wiſdom when ſhe came down from Heaven to be Cloathed with Fleſh, and to live and converſe among Men, to have brought down with her a Syſtem of Nature, and to have taught Men the Secrets of Philoſophy. It would have been an eaſie matter for Jeſus Chriſt in whom it pleaſed the Father all full-
Col. 2. 3. neſs ſhould dwell, and *in whom are hid all the Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge*, during the time of his Abode upon Earth, to have inſtructed the World in Natural as well as Divine Knowledge, to have taught Men Arts and Sciences, as well as Morality and Religion, and to have ſet

ſet up a *School*, as well as a *Church*. But to the contrary, it is very remarkable, that during our Saviour's whole ſtay upon Earth, and in all that various Converſation which he had with the Inhabitants of it, he never drop'd one Word concerning theſe things, never open'd his Divine Lips concerning any Matter, but what related to Morality and good Life, and would reveal no Myſteries to us but that great one of *Godlineſs*.

Our Saviour had once a very fair Opportunity, (I had almoſt ſaid a Temptation,) to ſatisfy the Curioſity of the World, in the great Theory of the *Præ-exiſtence* of Human Souls, when that Queſtion was put to him by his Diſciples concerning the Blind Man, *Maſter, who did Sin, this Man or his Parents, that he was born Blind?* The Queſtion ſuppoſes the Man in a capacity of Sinning before his coming into this State, therefore in actual Being, and conſequently proceeds upon the Suppoſition of *Præ-exiſtence*, which was alſo the generally receiv'd Opinion of

Joh. 9. 2.

of the *Jews* at that time, as well as a very Venerable and much Celebrated Doctrin in the *Gentile Philosophy*. Here therefore one would have expected that our Saviour having so fair an occasion offer'd him, should have taken the *Chair*, and have given the Inquisitive World a clear Determination concerning this great Question; but so far was he from this, that he utterly declines the Controversie, by so contriving his Answer, that neither one nor the other part of the Contradiction might be concluded from it; *Neither has this Man sinned*, says he, *nor his Parents, but that the Works of God should be made manifest in him.* Wherein the only thing decided is, that 'twas neither upon the account of the Man's nor his Parent's Sin that he was born Blind; but whether his Soul did præ-exist before its Union with this Body or no, (which was both the Supposition and the main drift of the Question,) this he wholly declines, and passes over with Silence, as indeed he does all Matters of meer Notion and Speculation.

For

For indeed it would not have ſuited with the Character of our Saviour's Perſon, nor with the end of his Appearance in the World, to ſet up for a Broacher of Notions and Theories, and erect a Society of *Virtuoſo's*; the grand Deſign of his Incarnation being to reſtore the Ruins of Human Nature, to re-eſtabliſh that Order which Sin had overturn'd, to ſatisfy the Divine Juſtice for the Sin of Man, and to redeem him from the Power as well as from the Guilt of it; to purify our Hearts, and to ſanctify our Natures, and thereby to make us *Meet Partakers* of that Inheritance with the Saints in Light, which he had purchaſed for us, and not to fill our Heads with Curioſities, or to feed our Mouths again with the unhappy Fruits of the Tree of Knowledge.

'Tis indeed very true, that Chriſtian Morality is highly uſeful to the Perfection of the *Underſtanding*, as well as to the Converſion of the *Heart*; that when all is done, the love of God is the beſt Light of the Soul, and Purity of Heart and Life, the

the best *Key* of *Knowledge*, even Human and Natural, as well as Spiritual and Divine; and that we cannot arrive to a Philosophical Brightness and Clarity of Mind, and to a right Discernment of things, by any Better or more Compendious way, than by following the Precepts and Instructions of Christ, and by Conforming our Selves to the Order of his Gospel. And in this respect, he may be said to lead us to the Knowledge of *Natural* things, and to open to us the receſſes of *Learning* and *Science*. But this is only indirectly and accidentally, by reason of the transcendent Excellency and Perfection of the Gospel of Christ, and the universality of its influence, whereby it extends it self to every thing that any way contributes to the Perfection of the Mind, as being a Remedy proportion'd to all its Defects, and a Medicine directly opposed to the Cause of all its Disorder. And all manner of Ignorance being in its Measure some Defect and Disorder of the Soul, it was necessary that so Perfect a Dispensation

penſation as the Goſpel of Chriſt ſhould have a proper tendency to the removal of it. But yet however it was no part of the principal, nor of the profeſt Deſign of Chriſt, to inſtruct the World in *Speculative Truths*; tho being to deliver to Mankind a Syſteme of Precepts that was proper for the reparation of Human Nature, it was fit he ſhould accommodate them to all its Defects, and that they ſhould have a tendency, indirectly at leaſt, to procure us all the Perfection we are capable of.

This Notion is well taken notice of, and well expreſſed by the Excellent Author of *Converſations Chrê-* Pag. 204.
*tiennes. Il eſt néceſſaire de ſuivre les Conſeils de Jeſus Chriſt, pour acquérir cette Perfection de L'eſprit, qui conſiſte dans la Connoiſſance de la Verité. Cependant Jeſus Chriſt n' eſt paſs venu pour faire de nous des Philoſophes; Ses Conſeils ne tendent qu' indirectement & à cauſe de leur Univerſalité, a nous rendre Sçavans. It is neceſſary to follow the Counſels of Jeſus Chriſt, that we may acquire that Perfection of*
Mind

*Mind which consists in the Knowledge of Truth. Nevertheless Jesus Christ came not to make us Philosophers, his Counsels tend only Indirectly, and by reason of their Universality to make us Learned.*

And the same excellent Person suggests to us a little after, a very good Reason why our Saviour Christ was not to instruct us in Natural and Human Learning. *Nous demeurerons éternellement tels que nous serons dans le Moment que nôtre ame quittera nôtre Corps*, &c. *We shall eternally remain such, as we shall be in the Moment that our Soul shall leave our Body. If we love God in this Moment, we shall love him always; for the motion of Spirits is only unconstant and meritorious for this Life. But all Human Sciences are in themselves unprofitable to regulate this Moment upon which depends our Eternity: They merit us not the Assistances of Heaven for this Moment; they incline not our Hearts towards God. So Jesus Christ was not to guide us directly to this Perfection of the Mind which is barren for Eternity, and ceases at the Moment*

*Moment of Death. He was to recommend to us a Privation from ſenſible Good, to the end that our Hearts may be fill'd with his Love, being empty of every thing elſe; and that adhering to nothing in the Moment that commences Eternity, our Love may carry us towards God, who is the Source of all Happineſs.*

This Conſideration of this Excellent Perſon more diſtinctly unfolded, reſolves into this Order of Reaſoning. He Firſt of all ſuppoſes, that the Eternal ſtate of Man, is the only ſtate of Man that is conſiderable, or that deſerves to be regarded by God. Secondly, He ſuppoſes, that this Eternal ſtate of Man depends upon the Diſpoſition the Soul ſhall be in at the very Moment of her Separation from the Body. Thirdly, He ſuppoſes that Human Sciences have little or no tendency to put the Soul in a right Diſpoſition for that Critical Moment. Whence in the laſt place he infers, That to inſtruct Men in Human Sciences, was not a thing worthy of our Saviours Care, as being altogether

Calculated for this Life, and having little or no relation to Eternity, the only considerable state of Man. This is the Substance of this Author's reasoning, which (like every thing of his,) is so Solid and Consequential, that it loses nothing by being cast into a more Logical View.

But to return to the thing before us; the greatdesign of God in all his Applications to Mankind, particularly in that signal Address of his to the World by his Son, was to reduce us to our true Good, to refix us in our Principle, to reunite us to himself, and so to secure our Eternal State, the only interest of Man that deserves to be Regarded or Provided for. And therefore since Human Sciences contribute little or nothing to the Promotion of these Ends, it was altogether beside the Design of God to make any particular Discovery or Revelation of them to us, and accordingly he has not.

Not

Not as if the Knowledge of these things were no *accomplishment* of the Soul, or that God *envies* us any Perfection. Neither of these ought to be supposed. All Truth in some measure perfects the Understanding, and God is willing we should have all the Perfection whereof our Natures are capable: But he would not have our present narrow Faculties divided and distracted in the prosecution of our greatest Good, or to be hinder'd by less concerning Occupations, from attending upon what is of far greater Consequence.

I say of far greater Consequence, and that not only in respect of the proper value of the things themselves, but also as to the *Opportunity* of their attainment: For now is the only opportunity of securing a happy Eternity; but now is not the only opportunity of securing the Knowledge of Human Sciences. Whatever is done in order to a happy Eternity, must be done now, there is no other Season for it; but as to Speculation and Science, we may attain to that *Hereafter*, and

certainly ſhall, if the other part be but ſecured. If God can but once bring us and unite us to himſelf, he thereby ſecures our whole Intereſt; for in uniting us to himſelf, he unites us to all *Good*, and conſequently to all *Truth*, which will include the Perfection of our Underſtandings as well as of our Wills, and ſerve to make us *Knowing* as well as *Happy*.

The great thing therefore that God has to take care of in reference to Man, is to bring and unite him to himſelf, to ſecure his Eternal ſtate, as that which is every way his greateſt Intereſt, and which draws after it the whole. And therefore when he addreſſes himſelf to us, it is not worthy of his Wiſdom (which ſets a true value upon things) to take notice of any thing but what directly leads to this great End; and therefore not of Human Arts and Sciences, which at the moſt can contribute to it but remotely and indirectly; but only of thoſe *Moral Qualifications* of Mind, and thoſe Duties of *Practical Life* which are Natu-

Naturally, and therefore indiſpenſably neceſſary to make us capable of Happineſs, and to put us in a fit Diſpoſition and Order for Eternity. Theſe are the only things that Man is concerned to know, and therefore theſe are the only things that God has thought proper to reveal to him, or to treat with him about; which by the way may be ſufficient Satisfaction to thoſe Pert Forward Wits, who take this as an occaſion of diſparaging and thinking meanly of Scripture, becauſe it does not inſtruct the World in Arts and Sciences, or hold out to us a Syſtem of Philoſophy.

But, to make another *By-Reflection*, does not this give us a Meaſure as to our own Conduct, as well as juſtify the Meaſure that God has taken? May we not hence collect what is the great Concern, and what ought to be the great Buſineſs of Man in this World? For may we not argue backward as well as forward? And will not the Argument hold both ways? We have ſhewn

that the things relating to Moral Life and Practice, are the only things God has revealed, because they are the only things that are necessary for Man to know; and will it not as well follow that they are the only things necessary for Man to know, because they are the only things which God has Reveal'd? The Argument indeed is less Artificial, because it is taken from *Authority*, but it is nevertheless concluding, because that Authority is Divine and Infallible. The infinite Wisdom and Goodness of God oblige us to think, that he has Reveal'd whatever is necessary for Man to know; and therefore since the things relating to Life and Manners are the only things that God has reveal'd, we have hence a safe Warrant to conclude that these are the only things necessary for Man to know. And if these are the only things necessary for Man to *know*, then are not these also the only things neeessary for Man to *study* and imploy his Thoughts about? And will not this severely condemn the Conduct of those (upon whom the World bestows the Character of *Great* Men,) who

who lay out their time and their Thoughts upon such Studies as signify little or nothing, to the *Moralizing* of their Minds, and the disposing their Souls for Eternal Happiness, the only End that can justify any of our Studies, or any of our Undertakings? Yes it will; but I need not persue this Remark any further, having professedly discours'd it in a particular Treatise.

*Reflect. on the Conduct of Human Life.*

We have then here before us the true *Subject Matter* of this great Address from God to Man, which you see is no other than the things which relate to this Moral Conduct, to the regulation of his Life and Manners, as being the only *Means* that have an immediate Connexion with his Great *End*. These are the Matters which God treats with us about, which he opens and sets before us, and continually inculcates to us, as being of the greatest concernment both to be *known* and *practised*. These are the things concerning which *Wisdom cries, and Understanding puts forth her Voice*, when she calls and directs her Voice to the Sons of Men. And so the

Micah 6. Scripture repreſents it. *He hath ſhewn thee O Man what is good*; not what is Notional or Speculative, but what is
Job 28. *good*. And ſo again, *unto Man he ſaid, behold, the Fear of the Lord, that is Wiſdom, and to depart from Evil, that is Underſtanding*. And the Eternal Wiſdom of God ſays of her ſelf, that ſhe dwells with Prudence, which denotes that Knowledge of Man which is *Practical*, and conſiſts in propoſing a right end, and in proſecuting it by
Prov. 8. 12. fit and proper Means. *I Wiſdom dwell with Prudence*. But we need go no further than the laſt Clauſe of our Text, which moſt expreſsly makes this to be the Matter of the Divine Addreſs to the World, *O ye Simple underſtand Wiſdom, and ye Fools be ye of an Underſtanding Heart*. Where 'tis obſervable, that not the *Head*, but the *Heart* is here made the Seat and Subject of Underſtanding; which plainly ſhews it to be meant not of Notional or Speculative, but only of Practical Wiſdom, that Wiſdom
Jam. 3. 13. which (as St. *James* obſerves,) ſhews it ſelf in a good Life and Converſation.

And

And indeed when all's done, a Good Life is the beſt Proof of a Good Underſtanding, and a Pure Heart the moſt ſatisfying Argument of a Clear Head. For a Man that will act regularly, muſt think rightly, and carry his Thoughts about him too. He muſt have a true Idea of things, and of their Relations and Proportions to each other; he muſt know what is his Good, and what is his Evil; what is his true Intereſt, and what the moſt proper means to ſecure it. He muſt know himſelf and all the Capacities and Relations in which he ſtands, both towards God and his Fellow Creatures, and all the Duties that reſult from thoſe Relations, and the ſeveral Reaſons, Arguments and Motives of thoſe Duties: He muſt know how to diſtinguiſh between Truth and Probability, between Shadow and Subſtance, between Reality and Appearance. He muſt be a Perfect Maſter of *Proportion*, and thorougly comprehend the Art of *Meaſuring at a Diſtance*, which is harder in Morality than in Geometry. He muſt underſtand how to value a Futurity, and to take the juſt

*Height*

*Height* of a *Reversion*, that so he may rate things according to their true moment, and not be so far imposed upon in his Choice, as to prefer the Pleasures of this short Life before a Happy Eternity, because of that advantagious Ground upon which they stand, the Recommendation of being *Present*. All this he must know, and all this he must consider. I say *consider*, for he must have a good *Presence* of *Mind* with him, as well as Exactness of Judgment, and not be actully ignorant of what he habitually knows; for then he will act as absurdly, as if he had not known it. For 'tis all one, as to the purpose of Well-living, not to have right Notices and Apprehensions of things, or not to have an actual view and sense of them. He must therefore *Consider* as well as *Understand*, and have his Thoughts about him, as well as in him. He must not only walk with a good Light, but must bear it always before him, and have it continually shining in his Eyes, that so he may not make a false Step for want of having his Light present. In one Word, he must have a right Judgment in all

all things, and an actual view of what he knows. If he be not thus qualified, I do not ſee how he can Live and Act well; and if he be, I do not ſee what is wanting to make and denominate him truly *Wiſe*.

The truth is, there is not ſuch a mighty difference between Speculative and Practical Wiſdom, that he that has the latter ſhould be ſuſpected of wanting the former: For my part I can apprehend no other difference but this, that the latter adds to the former the advantage of *Conſideration*. If he that is Speculatively Wiſe, did but joyn Conſideration to his Notion, he would quickly become Practically ſo; if he did but duly weigh the Truths that he knows, and attend to their Conſequences, if he were always awake, and had his Eyes always open, if he had his Knowledge actually before him, that is, if he did *Conſider*, (for Conſideration is nothing elſe but actual Knowledge,) he could not chuſe but act regularly, and in Conformity to his Light. For 'tis while the Underſtanding takes a nod, and the Light of the Mind is eclips'd, that

that the Will ſtarts aſide and goes aſtray, all Sin being the reſult of Ignorance, of one ſort or other, either *Actual* or *Habitual*. So that the Practically Wiſe Man is all that the Speculatively Wiſe Man is, and ſomething more, as having not only a right Apprehenſion of things, but an Actual View of what he knows. And tho he that has a good Underſtanding is not always a Good Man, yet he that is a Good Man, muſt be a Man of good Underſtanding. According to that of the Pſalmiſt, *A good Underſtanding have all they that do his Commandments.*

Pſal. 111. 10.

And indeed they are the only Perſons that truly deſerve that Character: And accordingly 'tis obſervable that Holy Scripture (which repreſents things always according to their true Ideas, and in a true Light,) never makes mention of *Wiſdom* with any Mark of Commendation or Excellence, but it always means by it, either the actual Practice of our Duty, and the leading a good Life, or at furtheſt the Study and Knowledge of thoſe Truths which have a direct Tendency

Tendency to it, and carry an immediate Connexion with it.

The Gentlemen of the *Port Royal* deliver themselves so well upon this occasion, that 'tis worth while to hear what they say. *The Holy Scripture only calls that Science, which teaches us how to Live, accounting all that are ignorant of it Fools and Mad Men. Nor would Man, were he Rational, Speak any other Language than this. For it is most conformable to Reason and Nature, and 'tis only his Blindness that has brought another Dialect into Fashion.* This is very truly and very judiciously remark'd, and may serve to satisfie us why God does here represent the practice of a Good Life, (which he makes the Matter of his Address to Man,) under the Title and Appellation of Wisdom and Understanding. *O ye Simple understand Wisdom, and ye Fools be ye of an understanding Heart.* Wherein he also acts the Rhetorician, recommending the Matter of his Address under the perswasive insinuation of Wisdom, a thing we all desire and pretend to, that so it might have a more advantagious *Hearing*, and gain the

*Moral Essays*, Vol. 2. Pag. 311.

the greater acceptance in the World; which leads me to consider

3. *The great Concern that lies upon the World to attend to, and comply with this Divine Address*: Which I shall dispatch in a very few Words, out of Reverence to the Subject of my Discourse, being willing to suppose that an Address from God may be sufficient to make its own way into the Hearts of Men, without the Assistance of any Human Recommendation. And certainly, if ever Man be concern'd to Hear and be Attentive, it is now; and that whether we consider the Majesty of the *Speaker*, or the Moment of the Address.

First, The Majesty of the Speaker, who it seems is no other than the Eternal and Essential Wisdom of God. And shall Man be *Deaf* when *God* speaks? When then will he hear, and to whose Voice will he give his Attention? If the Great God can condescend to address himself to a Creature, sure one would think that Creature might well afford to hearken to the Application of his God. We hearken

to

to the Voice of our Fellow-Creatures continually, and reckon it as a neceſſary Civility to do ſo; and ſhall we not all ſhew the ſame regard to our common Creator? God hears us, when we addreſs our ſelves to him, and ſhall not we hear him when he addreſſes himſelf to us? Shall we, can we be Deaf to ſuch a Speaker? When Wiſdom cries, and Underſtanding puts forth her Voice, ſhall we then refuſe to Hear? Or (which is worſe,) ſhall we hear, and deſpiſe, forget and neglect to do? Certainly we do not conſider the Quality of him that ſpeaks to us, if we can be thus liſtleſs and regardleſs of what he ſays. As we do neither

Secondly, The Moment of the Addreſs it ſelf; which is concerning the greateſt, perhaps the only Intereſt we have at ſtake. For 'tis not God's own ſuit that he thus earneſtly ſolicits with us, neither is it for his own advantage that he makes theſe continual Applications to us. But it is our Intereſt and our Concern that he eſpouſes; and as 'tis *to* us that he ſpeaks, ſo 'tis *for* us, and for our Good, and

and the greatest Good too that we are capable of. That which he courts us to, and importunes us for, is that we would be *Happy*, and that we would take such a *Course* as will make us so: That we would live and act wisely and like our selves, that is, like rational Creatures, according to the Order of our Being, and the Perfection of our Nature. That we would fit and dispose our selves for the Happiness he has prepared for us, bring our selves within the Compass of his Love and Mercy, and so demean our selves for this short time, that he may reward us with a Blessed Eternity. This is the thing which God treats with us about, this is the Burthen of all his Applications. He that first spake us into Being, would fain now speak us into the Order and Perfection of Being, into Happiness. And is not such an Address as this most worthy of our Attention and Compliance, meerly upon the account of its own Moment, tho it came from some *inferiour* Being, and had no recommendation from the Divinity of the Speaker? Much more then, since it comes to us from *above*, from the

the very Eternal and Subſtantial *Wiſdom* of God, who though too Great to gain by our Happineſs, is yet too good to ſee us Miſerable.

*See then that ye refuſe not him that Speaketh*; for 'tis not a light thing to reject ſuch an Addreſs from ſuch a *Speaker*. But if we ſhould be ſo ſtupid and diſ-ingenuous, *Wiſdom* her ſelf has forewarn'd us what we muſt truſt to, and what return we muſt expect. *Becauſe I have call'd and ye refuſed, I have ſtretch'd out my Hand and no Man regarded. But ye have ſet at naught my Counſel, and would none of my Reproof, I alſo will laugh at your Calamity, I will mock when your Fear cometh.* Heb. 12. Prov. 1.24

There is a time coming on, when we ſhall be very willing that God ſhould hear us, and that is at the *Hour* of *Death*; and there will be a time when we muſt and ſhall hear him, namely, in the *Day* of *Judgment*, when he ſhall ſit in the Court of his Juſtice, and give final Sentence upon us. And therefore as we would have God readily to hear us at the Hour

of *our* Death, and as we would comfortably hear him in the Day of *his* Judgment, so it concerns us to hear him now in this his Day of Address and Treaty with us, while he bespeaks us by all the variety of Application, while Wisdom cries, and while Understanding puts forth her Voice.

Let us all then seriously consider and comply with this Divine Address, and let this be the return of every Soul, *Speak Lord for thy Servant heareth.* Amen.

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*Postscript*

## *Poſtſcript to the Firſt Diſcourſe.*

FOR a further Juſtification of the Meaſures laid down concerning the Love of God in our Account of that Firſt and Great Commandment which injoyns it, I ſhall now offer another Conſideration taken from the *Will* of God, and our Obligation of being conformable with it. I beg leave here to *ſuppoſe* that the Will of God is the Meaſure of all *Good*, as the Underſtanding of God is the Meaſure of all *Truth*. Not as if I thought either the Underſtanding or the Will of God to be (as is the Opinion of ſome) in ſuch a Senſe the Meaſure of Truth or Good, that what God conceives as True, ſhould be therefore True becauſe he ſo conceives it, or that what he wills, ſhould be therefore Good becauſe he wills it, which would be a Suppoſition of very miſchievous Conſequence as well in reſpect of Morality and Religion, as of Science and Speculation. But only that as the Underſtanding of God is ſo exact and infallible, that he can form no Judgment but what is according to Truth, ſo the Will of God is alſo ſo orderly and regular (as following the Conduct of an unerring Light, (that he can will nothing but what is Good. And that therefore as we can ſafely argue *à Poſteriori*, that ſuch a Propoſition is true, becauſe God ſo conceives it, ſo we may in like manner argue from the

Will of God, that such a thing is Good, because he wills it. In this Sense I suppose we may warrantably say, that *whatever God wills is Good*; not as if it were therefore Good because he wills it, but because such is his Perfection that he can will nothing but what is so *antecedently* in its own Nature. So that the Will of God may and must be admitted as a just Standard and Measure, tho not as the *Cause* of all Good.

But now if the Will of God be the Standard and Measure of all Good, as the Understanding of God is the Measure of all Truth, then 'twill follow, that it is as much the Perfection of our Will to be conformable to the Will of God, as 'tis the Perfection of our Understanding to be conformable to the Understanding of God; that the former does perfect the Soul as much in a *Moral* way, as the latter does in an *Intellectual* way; and that therefore if we would sincerely consult the Perfection of our Rational Nature, we should at least as much endeavour to conform our Wills to the Will of God, as to conform our Understandings to the Understanding of God; to will as God wills, as to think or conceive as God thinks or conceives. For if Good be as perfective of the Will, as Truth is of the Understanding, then the Perfection of the Will must as much consist in Conformity with that which is the Measure of Good (whatever it be) as the Perfection of the Understanding does consist in its Conformity with the Measure of Truth. And since this Measure of Good is acknowledged to be no other than the Supream Will, the Will of God,

it

it is evident that Conformity with his Will muſt be as much the Perfection of our Will, as Conformity with his Underſtanding is the Perfection of our Underſtanding. Whence it will follow, that as our Underſtandings cannot vary, tho never ſo little from the Divine Underſtanding without falling into *Error*, ſo our Wills cannot decline, tho never ſo little from the Divine Will, without falling into *Sin*. As all Deviation from the Underſtanding of God is an *Intellectual*, ſo all Deviation from the Will of God will be a *Moral* Diſorder. We ought therefore to be thoroughly Conformable with this great and univerſal Standard of Morality, to tune our Wills to a perfect *Uniſon* with the Will of God, and in every reſpect to will the ſame that he wills, if we would be exact Followers of Order, and contain our Souls within the ſtrict Bounds of what is juſt and fit. And there is a time coming when we ſhall do ſo, when *Self* ſhall be quite extinguiſh'd in us, when we ſhall maintain no private or particular Motions, but ſhall follow the Order and Motion of God, and be carried along as it were with this great *Vortex*, having our Wills intirely reſolv'd into the Divine, without ſo much as the leaſt *Velleity* left of our own, that ſo the Will of God, as God himſelf, may be *All in All*.

This Conformity of the Human Will with the Divine, is a Subject much handled and inculcated in the Writings of the *Myſtics*, and the Jeſuit *Drexelius* has written a very uſeful Book upon it. And indeed thoſe ſort of Men are generally very happy in *Devotional Compoſitions*, and

and particularly upon the present Subject, of conforming our Wills to the Divine, which they treat of in a very savoury and affectionate way, only I think they have here generally this Fault, that they look upon it as a *particular* Vertue, and represent it as Matter of *Counsel*, as something Heroically Excellent, as the Top and Height of Christian Perfection; whereas indeed it is a Vertue of the most General and Transcendental Nature, such as comprizes within its Latitude *the whole Duty*, and nothing but the Duty of *Man. Idem velle quod vult Deus*, is the Sum and Abridgement of all Morality, and ought to be as a *Motto* inscribed upon every Soul, as including neither less nor more than what is the strict and necessary Duty of every Intelligent Creature. As an intire Conformity of our Will with the Will of God, involves the whole Moral Perfection of Man, so Disconformity from the Will of God, is commensurate to the whole compass of Sin; and there cannot be the least Disconformity of our Will from this Measure without Disorder. If we think otherwise than God thinks, we err or think amiss; and if we will otherwise than God wills, we sin or will amiss, since we do then as much recede from the Supream Measure of Good, as in the other case we do from the Supream Measure of Truth. It is therefore not only Matter of Counsel and Perfection, but our strict and necessary Duty to follow the Order of God, and to have our Wills intirely Conformable, and as it were *Perpendicular* to his.

Well,

Well, if ſo, then we ought to love what God loves, and nothing but what God loves, and to love that with all *our* Capacity which God loves with all his. This is clear at Sight. But now 'tis moſt certain that God loves himſelf, becauſe he is truly Lovely; and therefore we ought alſo to love God. And 'tis as certain that God loves himſelf infinitely, becauſe he is infinitely Lovely. And therefore we ought to love God with our Infinite, that is, with our whole Love, and to our utmoſt. For 'tis nothing but utter Impoſſibility, nothing but an Eſſential Incapacity, nothing but our being *Creatures*, that can excuſe us from loving God in a degree of Love ſtrictly infinite, there being no other truly worthy of God. But ſince we cannot do that, we ſhould detain no part or degree of what is finite, but love God with our whole Love, as he loves himſelf with every degree of his own Love.

'Tis alſo moſt certain that God as being an infinitely Perfect and Self-ſufficient Being, can love nothing but himſelf, as Love is (here) taken for *Wiſhing* or *Deſiring*. God can deſire nothing but what is Good and Deſirable, and there being not the leaſt Degree of Good or Deſirable, but what is contained in himſelf, in his own infinite Nature, 'tis impoſſible that he ſhould deſire any thing out of himſelf. All Deſire of any thing *without*, proceeds from ſome Want or Defect *within*; and accordingly all Beings that are under ſuch a Defect, (which is the caſe of all Creatures,) are alſo *Eſſentially* ſubjected to Deſire. If therefore God

God desires any thing out of, or besides himself, 'tis because of some Essential Defect, because he has not all that is Desirable in himself. But God (as his Idea imports,) is a Being absolutely Perfect, and every way Self-sufficient; he contains all the degrees of Being, and consequently all that is Good or Desirable within himself, and therefore 'tis impossible that any thing without himself should be the Object of his Desire. We may conclude therefore, that as God loves himself, and loves himself Infinitely, with the whole and full application of his Love, so he loves himself withal so intirely, as to love nothing besides, nothing out of himself.

Whence we are further led to conclude, that as this is God's Measure of loving himself, so this also ought to be our Measure of loving God: For if our Wills ought to be conformable throughout with the Will of God, and God loves nothing but himself, then 'tis plain that we ought to love nothing but God, or to express it in the Language of the Text, that if God loves himself with his whole Heart, Soul and Mind, with the united and collected Strength and Energy of the whole Trinity, then we also ought with our whole Heart, Soul and Mind to love God; whom since we cannot love *Infinitely*, we should at least love *Intirely*.

FINIS

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